Russia, NATO and the EU: the Yeltsin Years

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Seventy four thousand and eighty three words

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the Regulations of the University of Bristol. The work is original, except where indicated by special reference in the text, and no part of the dissertation has been submitted for any other academic award.

Any views expressed in the dissertation are those of the author.

SIGNED: .....

DATE: 18/10/05

A note on transliteration

Transliteration of Russian in this dissertation is based on the Library of Congress system but without diacritical marks. However, where words are well-known in English (for example, Yeltsin, Kozyrev and Chechnya) the familiar transliteration is used, and where translations by others are quoted, the spelling provided by the source is used (where Russian authors have had works published in English, the transliteration of their names is also as used by the source).

Abstract

Russian foreign policy in the 1990s, though in many ways chaotic, demonstrated a general move from an initial pro-Western strategy to a more 'independent' and 'pragmatic nationalist' strategy. The main feature of this move was a much more critical stance towards the West. Yet the Russian leadership displayed very different attitudes to two major Western organisations: while fiercely critical of NATO it was neutral or positively disposed towards the EU.

The thesis tries to discover why this was so by means of two explanatory frameworks. The first is an application of realist foreign policy theory. Neoclassical realism explains state foreign policy through the study of the international distribution of material power and the manner in which state elites attempt to alter this in their favour. The second framework uses constructivist insights into national culture. National identity strongly influences how policy-makers view the world and the possibilities open to them. An understanding of how the national identity debate develops helps to explain the policies they undertake.

The analysis demonstrates that each of the two schemes illuminates many aspects of Russian policy-making in the 1990s and that they are complementary rather than alternative approaches. Equally they leave much unanswered, and the details of policy-making are sometimes not well explained. The suggestion is that further research into Russian foreign policy (under Putin, for example) would require a more detailed focus on bureaucratic politics and interpersonal rivalries within the elite as a complement to the kind of analysis undertaken here.

To my parents and Alice

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

The questions that this thesis will try to answer emerge from some of the most important events of recent decades. The period under examination came immediately after the end of the Cold War, an event whose repercussions continue to be felt around the world, and particularly in Europe. One of the two opposing blocs suddenly vanished, freeing the republics of both 'inner' and 'outer' empires to seek their fortunes. Russia had been the core of the former Soviet Union, and was the inheritor of many of the USSR's political and economic legacies and its vast nuclear arsenal. It spent the decade under its first-ever democratically elected head of state searching for a role in the world and attempting to build an effective state and economy, proceeding fitfully towards these targets with many setbacks. It was a period of transition.

The other bloc, centred on Washington, remained in existence. Indeed, two great Western alliances of the Cold War – NATO and the EU – even undertook to expand their membership into areas formerly under Soviet control. Russia's place in Europe and the world would to a great extent be conditioned by the manner in which it dealt with these two organisations, and how they dealt with Russia. As it turned out, Russia developed very different relations with them. The key question asked in this thesis is: why did Russia act as it did towards NATO and the EU?

The theoretical frameworks used to find answers to this question are developed from realist and constructivist theories of foreign policy. These theoretical families encompass a huge variety of work, and the aim here is to distil from each of them those elements that are most likely to prove fruitful in the particular research being undertaken. The frameworks will guide this research in different directions and structure the answers provided in different ways. They should enable us to obtain some clearly defined – though perhaps limited – answers. In the end, the two frameworks should be able to tell us a great deal about why Russia acted as it did towards NATO and the EU in the 1990s.

Realism and constructivism have been chosen partly because they offer the prospect of achieving a complementary and well-rounded set of explanations, coming from different directions and focusing on different areas of political life. One looks at how the international environment shapes a state's politics; the other at how the political culture of a state shapes its view of the world. One is concerned with how material factors of international relations push states into certain ways of behaving; the other how states develop their national interests as a result of shared ideas held by members of the nation. Realism suggests that states are fundamentally alike, constructivism that it is by studying the unique aspects of a state that we can understand its policy.[1]

Using the two theoretical frameworks should also establish some of the major influences on Russian foreign policy – the manner in which the international distribution of power, or Russian national identity pushed the state elite to act in certain ways – which provide the essential background to any detailed examination of foreign policy processes in Russia.

The development of Russian foreign policy after the Cold War

The newly reborn state of Russia formulated its foreign policy in the early years of its existence on the ruins of a gigantic superpower of which it had been the driving force, inheriting many of the people, traditions, institutions and international obligations of that dead state and its predecessor. The period saw a sudden break, some continuity, and much confusion, both for those involved and for those observing what took place. The interpretation of these events is controversial.

Many analysts divide Russian foreign policy of the period into various phases, which act as useful analytical tools. Most see Russia's foreign policy as moving from pro-Westernism during the 'honeymoon with the West', changing to a more balanced, 'independent', pragmatic and Eurasianist approach, even if that meant clashing with Western interests.[2] This has sometimes been seen either as a return to geopolitical reality, or a reassertion of Russian culture. It is notable that

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[1] Some possibilities for using the two theoretical frameworks together, and the answers thereby provided, will be examined in the conclusion.

[2] Among analysts to put this idea forward are Felgenhauer (1995), Dunlop (1995), Sakwa (1996), Malcolm et al. (1996), Wallander (1996), Webber (1996), Arbatov (1997), Petro & Rubinstein (1997), Medvedev (1999) and Antonenko (1999).

under Yeltsin there were only three foreign ministers, a rather surprising fact given that Russia lived under seven prime ministers and through countless cabinet shuffles. Some observers would suggest that the main feature of Russian foreign policy has in fact been its constancy,[3] with the continuities being more important than the changes. Again, some have argued that far from being steady, or following a discernable pro-Western – Eurasianist path, it was chaotic, anarchic, too riven with internal conflicts to be anything except the reflection of personal antagonisms and ambitions.[4]

Despite such controversies, it is generally accepted that Russia viewed the EU far more positively than it viewed NATO. In the Russia of the mid-1990s, 'the only issue we have more or less unity on, is our disapproval of NATO' (Rogov, 1996: 27). At the same time, Yeltsin, Kozyrev, Primakov and other senior figures of Yeltsin administrations repeatedly stated that EU expansion was welcome or presented easily resolvable problems. During the whole period, in fact, NATO expansion was regarded with overt hostility, while that of the EU with more ambivalence or even lack of interest. Thus, 'views about the European Union are generally positive and they contrast strongly with the widespread criticism levelled at NATO' (Light et al., 2000: 6). Statements from all parts of the political spectrum support this conclusion (Shearman, 2001: 161). What caused this to occur? Was it to do with the manner in which Russian national culture affected the way policy-makers viewed the world? Or was it determined by material forces? Was it something about Russian national characteristics, or would any state in that position have followed more or less the same path?

Studying foreign policy in the 1990s

There are many approaches to the interpretation of foreign policy. Sovietology and post-Sovietology have sometimes been accused of remaining somewhat unconnected to developments in the social sciences in general and foreign policy analysis in particular. A recent study of Russian foreign policy and international relations research has suggested that 'the combination of contemporary study of Russian foreign policy and IR theory is still far from mainstream and is

[3] For example, Freedman (1997: 151).
[4] See, for example, Reddaway & Glinski (2001) and Lo (2002).

conspicuously underdeveloped' (Pursiainen, 2000: 3), and concludes that 'what is needed [is] ... to involve this field of study in those questions that are central in the contemporary IR debates' (Pursiainen, 2000: 212). The contention here is not that this should be the thinking behind all research into Russian foreign policy, but that a theoretical approach can provide a useful set of guidelines to a detailed empirical examination.[5]

Realism and constructivism

The empirical evidence will be tackled here through the medium of, first, a neoclassical realist approach, focusing on the influence of the distribution of material power; and second, a constructivist approach, focusing on national identity. The end of the Cold War and Russia's emergence as an independent state energised debates among social scientists about how to explain what had happened, what was happening, and to predict what was to come. It could be said that, 'just as Russia is experiencing an identity crisis today, so too is the study of international relations theory... Both Russia and the community of scholars who specialize in international relations theory and Russian foreign policy are experiencing one aspect of the Cold War's end that is a boon for both: all seemingly fixed viewpoints have been under critical assault for the last ten years' (Hopf, 1999: 4-5). However, by the end of the decade, not only was it possible to look back on almost ten years of Yeltsin as president of independent Russia, but to see that realism and constructivism had been at the heart of the debates in international relations scholarship of that decade. The exercise of trying to understand Russian foreign policy using these two theories promised to provide some profound understandings of the new Russia.

Realism aims to explain foreign policy by reference to the need for states to seek security in a dangerous world, with a focus on the external forces of material power that shape policy. Realist theories dominated the study of international relations during the Cold War (Shearman, 1997), much to the chagrin of theorists of other persuasions, but the collapse of the Soviet Union acted as a spur to renewed debate and a shift in emphasis to classical – or neoclassical – variants of realism. Russian

[5] See King (1994) on this debate.

foreign policy experts recognise the problems involved in national interest and power (see for example, Tsigankov, 2002: 290), but it is still a powerful, if not dominant source of analysis in Russia and in the West. Realism offers convincing explanations of why Russia went from 'naïve', 'romantic' pro-Westernism, to a policy more in keeping with its true status. In Chapter 2 a variant of realism will be outlined which uses the realist focus on the international distribution of power, but uses the neoclassical variant of realism that seeks to understand the particular case of a state in its own unique situation (taking account of some of the effective criticisms of neorealism of the late 1980s and early 1990s).

From the realist viewpoint, the shift in Russian policy from pro-Westernism to Eurasianism was inevitable, owing to the effects of material power (a combination of military, economic, technological and demographic factors) on rational policy-makers. The focus is on how Russian policy-makers used all of the tools at their disposal to alter the balance of force in Russia's favour. Given the end of the Cold War, the collapse of the Warsaw Treaty Organisation and then the loss of Soviet republics, this was a task that took place in extremely unfavourable circumstances.

Constructivist studies of Russian foreign policy are relatively few, but the literature is expanding.[6] These studies were given a boost by the end of the Cold War and realism's failure to predict or explain that event. Constructivist research has theorised how individual and national identities are formed and how national identity in turn forms the basis of a state's foreign policy by framing the perceptions of decision-makers. National identity is continually shaped by the members of a society, influenced by history and ongoing relations with external actors. In the constructivist view, Russia's shift to an overtly 'pragmatic-realist' foreign policy is the result of an alteration in the dominant view of Russian national identity held by members of the elite. In this view social norms provide the basis for action. 'National interests' result from the specific debates about identity within a country.

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[6] See for example, Wallander (1996), Prizel (1998), Hopf (1999), Neumann (1999), Hopf (2002) and Fawn (2004).

In both of these frameworks, as Chapters 2 and 3 demonstrate, the focus is on empirical research focused on the state elite. In neoclassical realism, members of the elite respond purposefully and predictably to the dictates of the international environment. In constructivism, shared understandings influenced by history and ongoing interactions with external actors need to be understood. The relationship of the two theories to evidence is different because they take a very different view of the relationship between individuals and the world they inhabit. They do share, however, a belief in empirical research: realism sees external factors as having a direct influence on domestic decision-making because decision-makers are predictably purposeful in their reactions; constructivism sees the continuous development of national identity as shaping the way policy-makers view the world; the influence of the outside world only 'makes sense' because of the way the shared understandings of their particular identities filter reality. These understandings can change rapidly and in ways that strongly influence how the external world and the actions of other actors are perceived.

In Chapters 4, 5 and 6 the realist framework will be applied to the research questions. Chapter 4 will examine, in the first place, Russia's global and regional position in terms of material power (military, economic, geopolitical and demographic factors). This, along with a brief examination of the decision-making structures and personnel in Russia in the 1990s, will establish the background for the chapters dealing, in turn, with NATO and the EU.

Chapters 5 and 6 focus on Russia's relations with NATO and the EU, respectively, and how the Russian elite adopted policies towards the two organisations in reaction to the imbalance of material forces in the particular cases under examination. These policies were aimed at improving Russia's security by increasing its power relative to other international actors. The chapters deal with change – each will attempt to show, first, how policy-makers perceived the changing situation in terms of the distribution of power, altered threat, and the possibilities open to Russia as a result; and, second, what policies were carried out in response (such as balancing, bandwagoning, regional versus global goals, and the use of bargaining chips). In conclusion, it will be possible to see whether and when these policies were successful in their aims.

Chapters 7, 8 and 9 apply the constructivist framework to the case studies. Chapter 7 aims to identify which aspects of Russian history were resurrected as important and relevant parts of the contemporary national identity debate, in which NATO and the EU played contrasting roles. It lays the groundwork for the two chapters that follow by establishing the context in terms of the wider national identity debate in Russia. It also describes the various groups which pushed for their favoured view of Russian identity, and how the arguments among them developed over the decade. The chapter shows how the overall tone of the debate was influenced by disappointments and successes (as interpreted against this historical evidence) in such relations. These points will form the basis for understanding the specific questions in Chapters 8 and 9.

Chapters 8 and 9 use the framework developed Chapter 3 to explain the divergence in policy between that focused on the EU and that focused on NATO. They therefore examine the interactions between, first Russia and NATO and then Russia and the EU. The aim is to try to understand Russian foreign policy towards these two institutions against the background of Russia's domestic national identity debate and how interactions with NATO and the EU influenced in turn Russian perceptions of the outside world.

Chapter 10, in conclusion, summarises the findings of the realist and constructivist explanations. It also examines what the frameworks were unable to explain, or seemed to explain poorly. It demonstrates that, working together, the two theories provide a broader picture than they do separately, and that they provide a useful basis for further research this field (of the Putin presidency for example); but the suggestion is made that as a result of the findings of this thesis, they should be complemented by a more traditional foreign policy focus on bureaucratic and interpersonal politics.

CHAPTER 2
REALISM AND THE STUDY OF RUSSIAN FOREIGN POLICY IN THE 1990s

A realist framework is likely to provide an effective way of explaining Russian policy towards NATO and the EU in the 1990s. There are many varieties of realism and the debate among realists is fierce, as are critiques of realism from outside. Over time, challenges from liberalism, Marxism and more recently constructivism,[7] as well as the changing international environment, have caused realists to modify their views while still remaining true to their core beliefs. Among the various realist theories, none is necessarily inherently superior to the others; yet some are clearly more suited than others to the research questions of this thesis.

Realism in the post-Cold War world

All realists found their theories on a belief in the essentially conflictual nature of human collective behaviour. The solution to Hobbes' war of all against all, the Leviathan, is the very thing lacking in anarchic international relations. This leads realists to posit the need for alternatives based on self-help. States must ensure their own security by building up their domestic power and by diplomacy (for example, forming alliances). Owing to the constant threat of conflict, the fundamental motivation of states is survival as independent entities. But attempts to ensure survival by one state lead to insecurity for others, because of the lack of trust in the anarchic system. States are therefore caught in a cycle of mistrust, known as the security dilemma.

Given the basic assumptions, realism can first be classified into 'classical' or 'structural' varieties.[8] The classical variant, associated with, for example, Machiavelli and Morgenthau, emphasises the timeless and repetitive character of political life: 'Social forces are the result of human nature in action. Therefore,

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[7] See Snyder (2002: 149) for a review.
[8] There are many other possible subdivisions (see for example Snyder, 2002: 149-150), some of which are discussed later in the chapter.

under similar conditions they will manifest themselves in a similar manner' (Morgenthau, 1995: 42). Classical realists analysed leaders' calculations, which had to take into account human nature and the realities of material power, from the medieval prince to the Cold War statesman.[9]

Structural realism, which found its most famous exposition in Kenneth Waltz's 1979 *Theory of International Relations*, preferred a 'scientific' approach. This came from a desire to avoid classical realism's theorising on humanity's timeless drives and interpretations of the calculations of leaders. Weak states balance against powerful states owing to the work of structural forces over time; patterns emerge from the anarchic coaction of sovereign bodies. Waltz and other structuralists 'insist that social science must move beyond self-conceptions and motives because individuals are constrained by structural forces over which they have no control and of which they may possess no knowledge' (Buzan et al., 1993: 8). But in asserting that the nature of international life is determined by the distribution of military power, they accept that human life is insecure as a result of the aggressive nature of other humans, and that it will always be so – and hence 'smuggle in' classical realist pessimism.[10]

Waltz always insisted that he was interested in long-term patterns of behaviour, and sidestepped such controversies. The goal was a parsimonious scientific theory explaining a few things well, founded on laws which are merely regular and repeated behaviour patterns (Waltz, 1979: 6).[11] In this it succeeded, because the theory showed that such patterns did emerge over long periods of time and provided powerful reasons as to why that was. It was unable to explain individual state foreign policies, but did not aim to.

Following the Cold War, high-profile academics in Russia and the West including John Mearsheimer, Stephen Walt, Kenneth Waltz and William

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[9] Morgenthau was prone to describing both the manner in which state leaders generally *do* act, and also to prescribing the manner in which they *should* act. Jervis (1998: 976) argues, for example, that Morgenthau's lecturing of the American people on the need for US foreign policy to follow the country's national interests 'would have been unnecessary had his descriptive argument been without flaws'. This is true of all realist analysis. However, realism doesn't deny that some state leaders operate more effectively than others; ineffective leaders can have disastrous consequences for their state.

[10] One of Waltz's problems is the implicit acknowledgement of the effects of ideology (and other unit-level variables) in his theory. Questions of ideology and domestic politics in general creep into his explanations to make them plausible. On this see Heikkia (1999: 67).

[11] Tickner (1995: 58), among others, has attacked such attempts by neorealists to impose order 'on a chaotic and conflictual world'.

Wohlforth, as well as politician–academics such as Zbigniew Brzezinski and Henry Kissinger, have espoused the realist policies that the West should adopt in dealing with the new Russia,[12] or used realist theory to understand and predict Russian policy.[13] Russians have also applied realist ideas to explanations of post-Soviet international developments and to outline the foreign policies that Russia should adopt as a result, often borrowing from Western sources (Sergounin, 1996: 6).[14] They include commentators and politicians across Russia's political spectrum, from Vladimir Lukin and Aleksei Arbatov of the liberal Yabloko party, to the conservative Evgenii Primakov and Evgenii Shaposhnikov; and also influential intellectuals such as Sergei Rogov, and the arch-conservative Aleksandr Dugin (who borrowed heavily from Mackinder).[15]

Neorealism to neoclassical realism: focusing on foreign policy

With the sudden end of the Cold War, neorealism came under fresh attack for its failure to have predicted the event. Many neorealists, such as Waltz, had claimed that the Cold War situation of bipolarity – the system dominated by two competing hegemons (dominant states) – was stable. The neorealist focus on structure and hence on long-term patterns was criticised for blinding it to the real factors that

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[12] According to Tsigankov (2002: 10) 'Today... from 80 to 85% of all the world literature on international relations, is published in the USA'.

[13] See MacFarlane (1999) and Donaldson & Nogee (2000) for further examples of a realist analysis of Russian foreign policy.

[14] Tsigankov has described the transition of Russian international relations theory from the state-controlled Soviet period to the 1990s, when 'The fundamental social-political changes in the country gave rise to urgent "social demand" for the elaboration of a scientific basis in solving such tasks, like an effective political socialization of society, an increase in the level of political culture and political participation of the people' (Tsigankov, 2002: 11). Unfortunately, while 'there are a great number of centres for international politics research... their disconnected efforts in the majority of cases were directed towards the implementation of immediate demands and prognoses of the political situation [rather than] the elaboration of the fundamental problems of international relations... In the majority of national higher education establishments, unlike in the many excellent universities in the "far abroad", international relations has not become an independent subject of study (Tsigankov, 2002: 11-12). However, such text books do exist. See, for instance, Moscow State Institute of International Relations, 2000.

[15] Arbatov was from 1995 Chairman of the Duma Subcommittee for International Security and Arms Limitations; from 1999 Deputy Chairman of the Defence Committee of the State Duma and head of the Commission for Defence, Security and Ratification of International Treaties; Lukin was Ambassador to the US (1992-1993) and Chair of the Duma Foreign Affairs Committee (1995-1999). Primakov was Director of the Foreign Intelligence Service (1991-95); 1996-1998 Foreign Minister; 1998-1999 Prime Minister. Rogov was head of the Institute of USA and Canada Studies, of the Russian Academy of Sciences; Dugin was notable for the publication of his book *Osnovii Geopolitiki: Geopoliticheskoe Budushee Rossii* [The Foundations of Geopolitics: the Geopolitical Future of Russia (1997)]; Shaposhnikov was the first commander of the CIS armed forces.

cause change in international affairs. Neorealists argued otherwise, but many realists moved towards explanations of foreign policy rather than the 'structural' factors of international life, largely as a result of having to explain the end of the bipolar Cold War structure, and the new situation that was perceived by most as one of unipolarity.[16] Realism has in fact continued to thrive in the post-Cold War world. The activity of realists in responding to their critics and in explaining this new situation led to an array of theories all of which could be called realist, many of which built on – and branched out from – neorealism.

The structural realism primarily associated with Waltz, while discredited in some people's eyes, does provide powerful tools on which theories that attempt to explain the behaviour of individual states and rapid change in international relations have been able to build. Waltz never denied that, in order to examine individual state foreign policy, we would have to go beyond the international structure and look inside the state itself (Buzan et al., 1993).[17] Thus, in order to explain Russian foreign policy, a realist explanation that does exactly this will be necessary. Neoclassical realists examine the way individual states respond to the international distribution of power and so build on neorealist insights; but they explain better some things that neorealism has been shown to be poorly equipped to deal with.

The key fact for realists after the Cold War was that they could argue strongly that 'states haven't disappeared, the conflicts among them continue to exist, the diplomatic and strategic behaviour of the powers... remains a fact of world politics' (Tsigankov, 2002: 289). They could argue that the international structure of anarchy among sovereign states was still the key factor in international affairs (as neorealism had powerfully argued), but that this could be combined with examination of foreign policy: they contend that state interests follow from the requirement to survive in an anarchic international environment and that state policy is influenced by material power distribution in the international system. But

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[16] Kapstein & Mastanduno (1999) among others are clear that the new situation is one of unipolarity. Waltz on the other hand believed that 'bipolarity endures, but in an altered state' (Waltz, 1993: 52). The question of how long the current situation, however it is characterized, will last – its durability – is also the subject of vigorous debate. See, for example, Deudney & Ikenberry (1999: 103).

[17] Buzan et al. (1993) argued that unit level factors could be included within structuralist realism to expand its explanatory power. Elman (1996), however, made the case that Waltz's realism could be used for a foreign policy analysis.

they examine the manner in which state decision-makers act on this situation and therefore study the workings of state policy-making deliberately ignored by neorealism, while taking as their starting point the international distribution of power.[18] In Russia, Yermolaev (2000: 1), for example, argued that the post-Soviet environment 'exerted a substantial influence on the nature of Russia's foreign and defence policy'.

The meaning of power

Power in the realist view is defined in terms of capabilities. It is the sum of capabilities controlled by a state: its military, economic and human resources. But the main point is that military power ensures security and therefore relative military power is the primary factor in international relations.

The realist view of the means by which economics affects international politics is that economic strength translates into military power as it allows for funding of the military and the overall development of society, including such vital factors as scientific and technological advances. Economic growth is necessary to maintain military power, and so the search for economic growth is linked to national security. But in some theories, economic power is also seen as an element of power in its own right, strengthening the state's influence and its ability to attain allies.[19] 'Given... the intimate connection between wealth and power, sensitivity to relative gains is evident in the economic realm as well' (MacFarlane, 1999: 222). The population of a state in crude terms is the means by which economic and military might are created; a large, educated and dynamic population is more likely than the opposite to provide the domestic conditions conducive to a thriving economy and a strong military.

The state's physical attributes of size, global position, access to trade routes and resources are also 'a tangible element of the relative strength of a country' (Sergounin, 1997: 27). After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia's astonishing change in size and borders (as well as other geopolitical factors to be examined in

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[18] What Mastanduno & Kapstein (1999: 4) called an 'ongoing effort to elaborate an alternative realist vision, one that goes inside the "black box"'. The black box is a way of referring to the state, which realists try to avoid looking into and thereby avoid examining the details of state policy making.

[19] See Kerr (1995: 983) on the links between economics and geopolitics.

Chapters 4, 5 and 6) were a crucial part of the environment in which Russia had to operate.[20] Russia was clearly in a very different situation from the Soviet Union. The global distribution of power had altered radically. All realists would point to the new international distribution of power as being of vital importance in explaining Russia's foreign policy. Governments use various techniques to alter the balance of power in their favour, forming alliances and building up domestic power. But beyond that there are some differences among realists as to what policies will (and should) be undertaken in such a situation.

State policy options

Many realists suggest that a state will attempt to ensure its survival and independence in the anarchic environment by balancing (i.e. forming alliances with other states) against the most powerful state in the system. Most realists see balancing as the strategy most likely to result in the state's survival and independence. In realism from classical to neorealist times, it is seen as the most common form of international diplomacy.[21]

The situation facing Russia and all other states in the 1990s was one of unipolarity, with the US as a global hegemon. Many realists argued that the other major powers in the world would logically begin to balance against the US. However, others suggest that this was not to be expected because states balance against threat, not power; or that in such a situation, allying with the power of the US was more likely than balancing against it or suggested that bandwagoning was more likely.

Balancing against threat

Walt's balance-of-threat theory (dating from before the end of the Cold War) argues that, rather than balancing against power, states will balance against those states that pose an immediate threat to their survival or interests. Walt (1987: vi) defines threat as a 'function of power, geographic proximity, offensive capabilities, and perceived intentions'. The threat is therefore a result of the analysis by one state of another's specific characteristics in these areas. It suggests that Russia

[20] See, for example, Trenin (2001).
[21] Doyle (1997: 164-165) has outlined some of the many balancing patterns recognized throughout history, such as 'Kautilya's circles' and checkerboard patterns.

would be more likely to perceive threats among states lying close to the country's borders than among those further away; or would find a threat in the fact that distant states with great offensive capabilities, such as the US, form alliances in neighbouring regions. Walt's examination of the evidence suggests that balancing is far more common than bandwagoning (the alliance of weak states with a preponderant power, or alignment with the source of danger) and that states balance against threat rather than power alone.

Yet Walt does allow that in some circumstances states are forced into bandwagoning, because, for example, they are located so close to an overwhelming power that resistance is useless. 'In general, the weaker the state, the more likely it is to bandwagon rather than balance' (Walt, 1987: 29). Walt's theory was a detailed exposition of the need for states to examine the each others' intentions. But later analysis, notably of the post-Cold War situation, widened further the possibilities: bandwagoning is more likely to take place in the unipolar world than before, and is likely policy for medium-sized (or second-tier[22]) states rather than only the very weak identified by Walt. This is a result of the United States' overwhelming military superiority. Thus Walt's theory retains its usefulness by focusing on threat and not only power (from which threat is in large part derived), but is too restricted in its predictions of policy.

Bandwagoning from a position of weakness

Schweller (1994: 93) showed that a state faced by an unfavourable balance (of either threat or power) has a variety of options which follow from realist reasoning. He sees the national interests as arising from the search for positive rewards, not just the avoidance of negative sanctions (as Walt, Waltz and others do). It becomes more likely that weak states will carry out 'piling on' bandwagoning with the stronger status-quo coalition.

Wohlforth (1994) has also provided evidence that bandwagoning is more likely for second-tier states (or declining challengers), when faced with

[22] In the theories in question the term refers to medium-sized states, rather than weak or extremely unstable states. Russia was of the second-tier, because it was able to dominate the weak states in its region, but was not strong enough to form a global pole as the USSR had done in the Cold War.

hegemons.[23] Bandwagoning, as a result of unipolarity in the post-Cold war world, has grown in likelihood in this view. In a unipolar world, Wohlforth demonstrated that 'the raw power advantage of the United States means that an important source of conflict in previous systems is absent: hegemonic rivalry over leadership of the international system. No other major power is in a position to follow any policy that depends for its success on prevailing against the United States in a war or extended rivalry... second-tier states face incentives to bandwagon with the unipolar power as long as the expected costs of balancing remain prohibitive' (Wohlforth, 1999: 8). In this situation, local balances of power may loom larger in the calculations of other states than the background unipolar structure.[24]

Russia was no longer a great power – it was a second-tier power in a unipolar world. As Snyder says, 'One can think of other ways in which conciliatory policies might be useful even to an expansionary state. For example, conciliatory tactics... might appeal to an offensive-minded state as a means of discouraging the formation of balances against it, or of weakening opposing alliances. Diplomatic détente could be a useful policy during periods when a state's power buildup has been frustrated by opposition' (Snyder, 2002: 166). Bandwagoning becomes a tempting policy, along with concurrent attempts, within the confines of that overall policy, to build domestic and regional power and position (Snyder, 2002: 166, footnote 24).

This is not to say that second-tier states will not try to increase their relative power, even if that takes place against an overall bandwagoning policy. 'The advent of unipolarity therefore does not mean the end of all politics among great powers... Second-tier great powers will not suddenly stop caring about their standing vis-à-vis other states... We should expect evidence of states' efforts to explore the new structure and determine their place in it' (Wohlforth, 1999: 35-36).

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[23] Realism has traditionally been concerned with great powers. Was Russia a great power in the 1990s? This was arguable, but not vital to the application of realist theories that are explicitly interested in second-tier powers. With its stockpile of weapons of mass destruction, as well as its vast regional weight, Russia could lay claim to this modest title (hence the importance of the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty to Russia). Fedorov (2002: 6) argues that 'while helping to deter large-scale aggression, nuclear weapons as such cannot be converted into political power,' but this is debateable and was a tactic used by Russia in the 1990s. Its success or otherwise will be examined in Chapter 5.

[24] Walt's focus on geographic proximity in threat perception is therefore still relevant. However, the argument below will be that sensitivity to the regional situation is not necessarily about balancing against threat: it can be local expansion under a global bandwagoning policy umbrella.

The key is that regional and second-tier competition should not be confused with balancing to restructure the system towards multipolarity.

These arguments open up interesting and likely possibilities: among them that a state such as Russia, when faced by a hegemonic global power, is likely to bandwagon with that power, unless it felt that this was putting its security at greater risk than an alternative strategy. Yet at the same time, such a policy might change as threat perception changes, and the state will be searching for advantage where possible. The point of Walt's work is not lost: the focus on threat. But the range of possibilities is much wider than he acknowledges.

The work of Snyder, Schweller and Wohlforth suggests a way towards a more detailed and narrative approach to explaining Russia's foreign policy. Empirical examination can show when and how Russian decision-makers decided to act. Their predictions move the focus beyond balance of power and threat perception and balancing to suggest a more complicated picture in which balancing, bandwagoning, local and global strategies are combined.[25] States fight to maintain or improve their situation in terms of relative power, and this is a fight that takes place in several arenas at any time. It is complex and might involve elements of bandwagoning, bluff, aggression and retrenchment. While the strategy of this fight is conditioned by the external environment, the environment does not determine the intricacies of policy tactics.

Power and elite perception

The distribution of power is hard, if not impossible, to calculate with minute accuracy. Moreover, in the real world, 'crude quantitative indicators of capabilities cannot accurately represent decision-makers' assessments' (Wohlforth, 1994: 98). There is no clarity about either what the objective threat is, or what should be the resulting policies.

Walt's balance of threat theory has already shown the need to understand why and when threat is perceived. Decision-makers can only decide on the basis of assessments that they make. The argument followed by neoclassical realists is that 'the scope and ambition of a country's foreign policy is driven first and foremost

[25] MacFarlane (1999) reaches a very similar conclusion, without expanding on it, in his analysis of Russia's post-Cold War foreign policy.

by its relative material capabilities. This is why they are realist. They argue further, however, that the impact of such power capabilities on foreign policy is indirect and complex, because systemic pressures must be translated through intervening variables at the unit level. This is why they are neoclassical' (Rose, 1998: 146).

Decision-makers are not necessarily rational or operating in conditions of 'bounded rationality'.[26] But they are purposeful in their pursuit of relative power and security (Taliaferro, 1999: 3). Domestically, state leaders aim to increase the viability of the state – to raise revenues for military expenditure, establish a productive and technologically advanced economy, and create the conditions for a healthy and educated population and also a political system in which decision-making is not hindered by domestic problems or inefficiency. In these circumstances, the elite will aim to establish an efficient system of rule, based on coherent institutions with agreed rules, and may see nationalism as a useful tool for achieving it (Tuminez, 1996).

Neoclassical realism 'predicts that an increase in relative material power will lead eventually to a corresponding expansion in the ambition and scope of a country's foreign political activity [and vice versa]... It also predicts that the process will not necessarily be gradual or uniform... because it will depend not solely on objective material trends but also on how political decision makers... perceive them' (Rose, 1998: 167).[27] What neoclassical realist theory shows is that, in the long run, a state's foreign policy 'cannot transcend the limits and opportunities thrown up by the international environment' (Rose, 1998: 151).[28] Neoclassical realists then specify the mechanism through which policy inputs translate into policy outputs – namely, the various diplomatic, military, foreign economic, and national security strategies that states actually pursue (Taliaferro, 2000: 155).

Russian statesmen could have witnessed the effectiveness of their foreign policy decisions by judging the ongoing process of success and failure, for

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[26] The concept of 'bounded rationality' takes account of the fact that people clearly aren't comprehensively rational, because of the 'the physical and psychological limits of man's capacity as alternative generator, information processor, and problem solver [which] constrain the decision-making processes of individuals and organizations' (Allison, 1971: 71).

[27] Research has shown that statesmen's perceptions of power can change suddenly in response to shock events. See for example Jervis (1976) and Friedberg (1988).

[28] See also Kapstein & Mastanduno et al. (1999: 8).

example, in relation to the expansion plans of NATO or import tariffs set by the EU. The judgement of success and failure would be a process on which these twin expansions would cast a continuous and revealing light. When the calculations go wrong, it can have serious consequences: territory or trade can be lost, areas of influence seized by an opponent. Threat must be recalculated, the possibilities of balancing and bangwagoning reconsidered. Foreign policy decision-makers will act in response to alterations in the distribution of power internationally and threat with coherent and purposeful policies.

Defensive and offensive realism

Defensive neoclassical realists suggest that the range of possibilities open to states is wider than offensive realists allow. To defensive realists, states aim to maximise security not power, and thus their concern is to maintain their relative position within the system and not to maximise power as far as possible. A 'retreat from confrontation' makes sense to a defensive realist when it is deemed to be necessary, given a position of weakness. But aggressive expansion is also feasible in certain cases.[29] Defensive neoclassical realists posit a more complex link between the crude distribution of power and the policies of individual states – than offensive realists. And the effects of intervening 'structural modifiers', such as the offence-defence balance, geographic proximity and access to raw materials, 'influence the severity of the security dilemma between particular states' (Taliaferro, 2000: 131). Offensive and defensive realists differ in the weight and the range of options available to leaders as a result, and hence the differences between them are a matter of degree. In practice, defensive and offensive realists often agree on likely policy. In general, security-driven expansion becomes more likely when leaders perceive that they have a good chance of military victory and if such a victory will redress the perceived power imbalance and improve security. Empirical study of policy can show how policy-makers perceived the situation and the correct response to it.

[29] Taliaferro (2000: 152) also makes this point.

External pressures and state policy-making

Realism – even of the neoclassical variety – rests on a "top-down" conception of international politics. All realists treat the pressures of the external environment as being more important than the preferences of actors within states. Wohlforth argues that 'If power influences the course of international politics, it must do so largely through the perceptions of the people who make decisions on behalf of states' (Wohlforth, 1993: 2). Yet 'the distribution of capabilities exists apart from the perceptions of statesmen, and influences... outcomes... In the final analysis the outcomes of state interactions will be influenced by the real distribution of power' (Wohlforth, 1993: 6).[30]

Relative material power therefore 'established the basic parameters of a country's foreign policy... [But] there is no immediate or perfect transmission belt linking material capabilities to foreign policy behaviour. Leaders must aim to grasp the progressive waxing or waning of relative power through calculations of their own and other states' capabilities and intentions, as well as through trial and error in diplomatic and military ventures. States will calculate where they can push for advantage, and where they are forced into retreat. They can play various bargaining chips in this way in a continuous struggle to realize advantage within the overall strategy.[31] Another means of calculation is through the lens of geopolitics and the geographical evidence of size and resource base. In this way states can calculate the effectiveness of their policies and hence any required changes in policy. Perception of threat will also change as the international environment changes.

Foreign policy choices are made by actual political leaders, and so it is their perceptions of relative power that matter' (Rose, 1998: 147). However, the 'menu' of possibilities available to state leaders is limited by actual relative power.

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[30] Defensive realism has been attacked for taking account of elite perceptions and misperceptions and other domestic factors, which sacrifices a supposedly core realist assumption that states are unitary, rational actors. Critics on these grounds include Legro & Moravcsik (1999). Yet as Taliaferro (2000: 158) argues, there is no reason why realists cannot take some account of additional factors if these add to our understanding of the real world. In this case, such additional factors simply complicate, but do not break, the link between the realities of the international world and state responses.

[31] Likely tactics include making concessions in some areas in return for concessions from the opposing side in others; using 'bargaining chips' to gain advantage where possible; attempting to weaken the ties binding potentially threatening alliances; and threatening the use of force. Pikayev (2000: 2), for example, sees the change in Russian foreign policy associated with the mid-1990s consensus as a search for bargaining chips (diplomatic assets), which included its powerful nuclear arsenal and influence in various regions.

Neoclassical realism, of both offensive and defensive varieties, posits a strictly limited role for domestic politics. The key point that arises from the discussion is that an examination of how the elite responded to the international environment in a case-study analysis can utilise this view of foreign policy to 'trace how, in actual cases, relative power is translated and operationalized into the behavior of state actors' (Rose, 1998: 16). It is decision-makers who translate relative power into policy. Realism predicts that leaders will act in a purposeful manner which is strongly influenced by the distribution of power. The perception of threat, for example, will be governed by the material capabilities and offensive potential of rival states. Policies are complicated and multi-faceted and change rapidly with changing realities, but this does not preclude the existence of overall strategy and pattern. The empirical chapters will be able to see exactly what policies were undertaken by the Russian leadership under the international conditions that obtained.

Therefore, once the overall distribution of power is established, the composition of the elite will be the next factor to establish: the decision-making elite forms the link between the distribution of power and policy. It is the elite's perception of developments and changes and possibilities in the international environment that leads to policies designed to alter the distribution of power (whether by balancing or bandwagoning, or, as suggested, some mix of the two) to the state's benefit. The case studies will aim to illustrate the complex ways that Russia perceived and responded to international developments that resulted in changes to the perceived relative distribution of power and how the elite perceived threats and possibilities. The objective facts of the distribution of power condition what the elite perceives to be the threatening aspects of that distribution. Leaders decide (within the limits set by the possibilities of relative power) what action they take. This perception can change rapidly, as can the decisions taken on the basis of the perception.

The possibilities for state action are limited by the realities of power, but can be complex and take place in different arenas at the same time. A state will use all the means possible to ameliorate its relative position. These means – which can be conceived of as bargaining chips – include those factors of material power (such as the threat of nuclear retaliation, embargoes of vital goods and alliance-building),

which can be used to defer an unwanted development. Chapters 5 and 6 therefore examine how the elite reacted to the perceived threat posed by NATO and the EU.

Russia, NATO and the EU in the neoclassical realist framework

A neoclassical realist approach offers a powerful framework for tackling Russian foreign policy-making in the circumstances of the 1990s. It shows how the distribution of power in the international environment influences state policy-making. It suggests that to understand a state's policies we need to take this fact into account; but it also directs research towards an examination of the policies adopted by a state in these circumstances. A state's leaders act within the constraints of the international environment to improve their state's relative position. Because state leaderships are in a constant struggle to identify the correct policies within a changing environment, 'different states or even the same state at different times pursue particular strategies in the international arena... while building on Waltz's assumptions about anarchy, neoclassical-realists explicitly reject the injunction that theories ought not to include explanatory variables at different levels of analysis' (Taliaferro, 2000: 134).

Neoclassical realism posits a relatively complex link between the distribution of power and policies that result, which a structured narrative account can illuminate. It also suggests a relatively wide range of possibilities available to the state elite. In practice, it is clear that a state has various facets of power that it can use in its favour to counterbalance its weaknesses.

States pull on all potential means of exerting international influence, using military and economic resources. Policy-makers will be desperate to slow down and reverse processes that weaken the state domestically, and react sharply to perceived attempts to exploit or further exacerbate any weakness. Thus as NATO and the EU carried out their policies of expansion and other activities in the military and economic areas, Russian policy-makers would have been acting to ensure that these were not to Russia's detriment, sought to exploit any advantages possible to improve Russia's position, and carried out all diplomatic and military actions deemed necessary to do so. The perception of threat would have been a major factor in such calculations.

NATO's continuing existence, combined with its enlargement and out-of-area military activity, highlighted Russia's contemporary weakness: Russia's politicians had to devise policies to react to this constantly changing situation (of threats and opportunities) within the global strategy of balancing or bandwagoning. The EU was primarily an economic and political alliance. To a realist this would mean that the EU did not present a threat, except that, by excluding Russia from trade and economic assistance, it could accelerate Russia's economic decline and relative economic weakness relative to other states. Russia's economic situation in comparison to the EU was similar to its relative military might in comparison to NATO.

CHAPTER 3
CONSTRUCTIVISM AND THE STUDY OF RUSSIAN FOREIGN POLICY IN THE 1990s

The argument in Chapter 2 was that a realist framework focusing on the international distribution of material power would be a productive way of explaining the policies adopted by Russia in the 1990s towards NATO and the EU. This chapter takes a very different approach, putting the case for a constructivist account that focuses instead on national identity. The argument here is that Russian national identity frames the way policy-makers view the world and shapes their foreign policy.[32]

Constructivism in the post-Cold War world

Like neoclassical realism, constructivism gained a boost at the time of the end of the Cold War, and since then has established an authoritative position, in both Russia and Western countries. 'Hardly known a decade ago, constructivism has risen as the officially accredited contender to the established core' (Guzzini, 2000: 147), and often seemed to be seizing the 'middle ground' (Adler, 1997) of international relations research.[33] Such a development was partly based on a powerful critique of neorealism and neoliberalism, the established core at the time.

What spurred the constructivist critique of mainstream research was its failure to predict or explain the end of the Cold War. Prior to this event, international relations research had been dominated by neorealism and neoliberalism. Both assumed that actors respond in a rational way to external circumstances, primarily the international distribution of power in anarchy. However, the end of the Cold War seemed to come about not by an alteration in the

[32] The manner in which the theoretical frameworks used in Chapters 2 and 3 are compatible (if they are) will be examined in the conclusion.
[33] At times scholars have responded with hostility from both sides of this middle ground. Keohane (1988) condemned constructivism's lack of concrete research results. Critical theorists have criticised its 'masked rationalism and positivism' (Price & Reus-Smit, 1998: 260).

material distribution of power, which many argued had not changed significantly,[34] but in ways of thinking. 'If the US and Soviet Union decide that they are no longer enemies, "the Cold War is over"' (Wendt, 1995: 135).

The constructivist alternative

States, on this reading, are not simply rational actors. Each – or more precisely the leadership of each – has changeable interests. Constructivists argued that 'intersubjective rules, and not some unchangeable truths deduced from human nature or from international anarchy, give meaning to international practices' (Guzzini, 2000: 155). This is because 'the distribution of power may always affect states' calculations, but how it does so depends on the intersubjective understandings and expectations, on the "distribution of knowledge" that constitute their conceptions of self and other' (Wendt, 1995: 135). Constructivists and others were therefore trying to account for precisely those factors that rationalists assume are unimportant (being to all intents and purposes identical) and do not accept the unproblematic nature of the term national interests.[35] They tried to understand the manner in which the identities and hence interests of actors are constructed through intersubjective understandings of the world.[36]

These arguments are based on a philosophical grounding very different from that of neorealists and neoliberals. Constructivists do not deny the existence of the outside world and the physical objects in it. But they do oppose the view that 'phenomena can constitute themselves as objects of knowledge independently of discursive practices... our interpretations are based on a shared system of codes and symbols, of languages, life-worlds, social practices. The knowledge of reality is socially constructed' (Guzzini, 2000: 159-160). Actors can only understand the world by means of socially created systems of meaning, and 'social identities are said to constitute actors' interests and shape their actions' (Price & Reus-Smit,

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[34] (Ruggie (1998: 25), for example, argued that 'in this instance brute force remained *entirely* on the side of the status quo'.

[35] Some critics of realism could accept that it provided useful insights but was underdetermining (Risse-Kappen, 1996: 185-186), others argued that it was more deeply flawed, because its view of humans as rational actors. Risse-Kappen's conclusion was that 'ideas intervene between material, power-related factors in the one hand, and state interests and preferences on the other'.

[36] It was also evident that realists such as Brzezinski, Kissinger and Waltz often implicitly accept that cultural or ideological factors influence foreign policy. As Weldes (1999: 7) notes, 'Even Morgenthau said that "the *idea* of interest is indeed the essence of politics"'.

1998: 266-267).[37] Agents and the socially constructed structures in which they operate 'are joined in a "dialectical synthesis" with the agents who create and inhabit them' (Wendt, 1987: 357). The key ideas of constructivism are therefore, first, that it is through shared (intersubjective) understandings that people make sense of the world and, second, that these are created in a 'structurationist' manner: agents and structures are co-determined. These structures, or systems of meaning, influence agents; in turn, agents influence the reproduction of these structures. People communicate with each other, make sense of the world and make themselves comprehensible to others. Just as spoken and written language are always changing, so do other shared understandings of the world, such as national identity. People act as a result of their understanding of the world and the appropriate or reasonable actions, which are based on such shared understandings – not as a result of some pre-determined 'rational' responses. The constructivist approach to foreign policy therefore involves an analysis of the manner in which such understandings come about and are reproduced, and how this affects the way state leaders carry out their interactions with outsiders.

To constructivists, a key concept here is national identity: the way in which members of the nation understand the characteristics which unify them and identify outsiders. National identity is considered to be the root of the national interest. The national interest is the way in which policy-makers perceive required action in the field of foreign policy, and this is formulated by their understandings of what gives the nation its unique identity. 'By studying the way in which national identity is formulated and understood by policy-makers, we can gain insight into the foreign policies they undertake' (Weldes, 1999: 4).

The usefulness of the concept 'lies in its subsuming ideology, political history, culture, and experience, variables that have been variously examined in the context of foreign policy roles' (Le Prestre, 1997: 9), an amalgam of 'language and religion as the basis of national unity, cultural and historical values and national and historical memory' (Tsigankov, 2002: 292-293). National identity production and reproduction are a result of domestic debates in which people – agents – discuss or demonstrate through their words and actions, either deliberately or instinctively, those things that make the 'nation': on issues of citizenship, religious

[37] See also McSweeney (1999: 139).

and ethnic membership, borders, enemies, friends and historical traditions. Public speech and action together create what can be considered a continuous public debate.

Several recent works have applied constructivist (or similar) approaches to understanding Russian foreign policy or closely related cases.[38] Such work deals in a comprehensive way with the history of Russian culture and ideologies such as Marxism-Leninism, and how relevant they are to foreign policy-making, offering 'explicit arguments about the relation between behavior and normative frameworks' (Pursiainen, 1999: 168).

History and national identity

To constructivists, national identity draws on history (including the history of and continuing relations with outsiders, usually in this context called 'others').[39] It is continually reproduced by the interpretation of that history and interaction by members of the group with outsiders – these are major influences on the manner in which agents reproduce the national identity. Thus the existing national identity, developed historically, is interpreted by agents in the present and used as the basis for the ongoing debate. Members of a nation use the collective national past for inspiration, for guidance to what should be the appropriate role for the nation and for understanding of what it is that makes the nation unique.[40]

The group's past strengthens the present sense of group identity. Those factors that loom large in the collective memory tend to be traumatic or triumphant events such as invasion, military victory and defeat or periods of oppression and expansion. These historical factors are one reason why different groups with different histories see the same situations in very different ways: what is seen as a threat by some is quite the opposite to others. Current relations with outsiders also influence national identity and interpretations of the past (see below).

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[38] Including those by Szporluk (1994), Prizel (1998), Kortunov (1998 and 1999), Risse-Kappen (1996), Neumann and Williams (2000), Kassianova (2001), Zevelev (2002b and 2002c), Hopf (2002) and Fawn (2004).

[39] The term 'identity' as used here originally comes from social psychology, 'where it refers to the images of individuality and distinctiveness ("selfhood") held and projected by an actor and formed (and modified over time) through relations with significant "others". Thus the term (by convention) references mutually constructed and evolving images of self and other' (Katzenstein, 1996: 59).

[40] Hunt (1987), for example, has analysed the continuities of cultural attitudes among the US elite and how they have influenced foreign policy.

People in a nation do not view such matters uniformly, and there is continuous 'competition' among individuals and groups over interpretation of the facts. There was a fierce struggle among groups and individuals in Russia, for example, after the Soviet period, in the search for guidance as to what constituted the core factors of 'Russianness' that could be used to hold together and provide purpose to the nation in the post-Soviet period. Among nationalists, the pre-revolutionary past was often evoked as a guide to the present. The Soviet period was frequently considered to have involved some kind of break with the natural historical process in Russia, and as having had a disastrous effect on Russian identity through its attempts to merge nations and suppress Russia's national individuality.[41] Communists and indeed many nationalists saw the Soviet period as providing a usable history in defining Russianness in the post-Soviet period, although the Russian Communist Party quickly adopted nationalist clothing.

Russia's foreign policy has often been seen as heavily influenced by culture and ideology, the result of the country's geography, mixture of 'Asiatic' and 'European' peoples and customs, Orthodox (and Muslim) religion, Bolshevism[42] and state–people divide, to name a few of the factors often considered important. Both native and foreign observers have often inferred that Russia's role in the world is or should be different in some way from that of other nations.[43] In the 19th century, for example, the broad Westerniser–Slavophile divide pitted two versions of Russia against one another: one in which the West was inimical to Russia, and one in which Russia lagged behind but should aim to be more like European countries.[44] Nikolai Gogol's question, in *Dead Souls* (1842) – 'Russia where are you flying to? Answer! She gives no answer' (Gogol, 1967: 259) – summed up the feelings of many. The Westerniser–Slavophile divide persisted throughout the Soviet period and beyond. In post-Soviet political writings and party political programmes, in the media and in other public forums, there was an explicit quest to discover the 'Russian idea' (or a tacit acceptance that there was a self-evident

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[41] Although at times the Soviet leadership, particularly under Stalin and Brezhnev, did toy with Russian nationalist rhetoric (see Chapter 7).
[42] See Pravda (1988) and Kramer (1999) for analyses of the role of ideology in influencing and constraining Soviet foreign policy making.
[43] As King (1994) has pointed out, Sovietologists' view of the significance of the rebirth of Russia differed according to how much weight they placed on Russia's cultural specificity.
[44] See Berdiaiev (1947), Neumann (1999) and Figes (2003) for overviews.

Russian idea and that the state should be adhering to it).[45,46] Repeating Gogol's question in *Dead Souls*, *Pravda* was asking 'Where are you going Rus? There is no answer', in February 1992 – the answer was still being sought 150 years after Gogol first asked it.[47] Continuities in the practices of political culture were evident too, despite the highly unsettled and continuing debate.

Russian history has often been regarded as taking place in cycles. Continuities in Russia's authoritarian traditions and political culture throughout the Tsarist and Soviet periods, as well as the role played by the West in Russian national identity, have been identified by Medvedev (1999) in his analysis of the long-term character of Russian society and by Reddaway & Glinski (2001: 19), who see Russian history as being similar to a 'pendulum swinging between progress and conservative backlash, between despotic, bloody police regimes and the anarchic "times of troubles"'. This takes place through a form of '"path dependence" as every new round... was shaped by memory of past and comparisons with previous similar experience'. Kortunov (1998: 2) also cites Kvasha's periodisation of Russian history into repetitions of 'planning and energy accumulation' followed by 'straining of all forces that strengthens the state and creates a strong leader'.

The role of the other

An examination of how Russian history was interpreted in building an idea of contemporary Russianness needs to be complemented by a consideration of how relations with outsiders (in the past and as an ongoing fact of national life) influenced the ongoing formation of national identity. Constructivists emphasize to varying degrees the importance of outsiders, or 'others', in the construction of the self. Kubalkova (2001: 33), argued that 'identifying "others" against whose alleged identity one forms one's own identity simplifies the equation, [of identity

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[45] The Russian state (in both Tsarist and Yeltsin periods) has also directed research to codify and make official what is unique about Russia and thus what its relations with the rest of the world should be.

[46] Duncan (1998) and Hosking (1998), to take two examples, have shown in their historical studies the various though limited continuities in Russian political culture from Tsarist times through the Soviet period.

[47] *Kuda neseshsia Rus?... Ne daet otveta* was the title of an interview with Ruslan Abdulatipov, Chair of the Russian Federation Supreme Soviet's Soviet of Nationalities, in *Pravda*, 19 February 1992.

formation] especially insofar as groups are concerned'. Most research in this field, indeed, suggests that it can only be through a dialogue with external others that the self can have any meaning. 'We can understand the state as having no ontological status apart from the various acts that constitute its reality... Difference is constituted in relation to identity' (Campbell, 1998).[48] The individual, in fact, 'needs her own identity in order to make sense of herself and others and needs the identities of others to make sense of them and herself' (Hopf, 2002: 4-5). Similarly, 'ethnic groups [are] reproduced by the very maintenance of the boundaries that separate them from other groups, who were seen to be constituted by their lack of this or that trait' (Neumann, 1999: 36).

This process becomes a never-ending dialogue between separate groups in international relations. 'Foreign policy provides a channel for engagement with the external environment, supplies evidence of the outside world's perception and appraisal of the collectivity, and functions as an instrument for realisation of the self-image... The process involves defining "us" against "them" by comparison with the chosen referent(s), differentiation, and drawing boundaries' (Kassianova, 2001: 821-822).

At the same time, 'national identity and security strategy are closely linked. Their relations are dialectical by nature. The problems of security strongly influence the process of national self-identification. And vice versa' (Baburkin, 2003: 2). Thus a country perceives another country through the lens of its own identity, 'and creates a new reality by interpreting the initial step through its own perception of the move. Identity and self-image are the main factors that determine how the actions of other countries are perceived' (Zevelev, 2002c: 456). The national identity debate consists of the public statements that can be understood as relating to 'us' and 'them'.

Russian foreign policy was conducted on the basis of the sense of Russian national identity shared by members of the elite, which in turn was influenced by the manner in which relations with important external actors developed. While the outside world and events that occur in it are given meaning by national identity, the threats, problems and opportunities that are seen to arise, and which are

[48] See also Der Derian (1997: 61).

successfully or otherwise dealt with, are in turn reinterpreted and affect the developing internal national identity debate, giving meaning to the nation itself.

The nation's history and relations with others are the two crucial aspects of its identity formation. But as noted, the constructivist view is that institutions like identity only exist because people make them exist. Therefore it is vital to understand which interpretations of history and outsiders (others) come to dominate and become the accepted version of foreign policy and how this occurs. It is individuals who make identity and foreign policy – which is the expression of national identity.

Individuals and the formation of identity: the pre-eminent role of national elites

The national identity debate is conducted by people. But some people hold more influential positions in society than others and thus have more power to determine the generally accepted vision of the nation. Power is understood by constructivists to be 'not only the resources required to impose one's view on others, but also the authority to determine the shared meanings that constitute the identities, interests and practices of states... Because social reality is a matter of imposing meanings and functions on physical objects that do not already have those meanings and functions, the ability to create the underlying rules of the game, to define what constitutes acceptable play, and to be able to get the other actors to commit themselves to those rules because they are now part of their self-understandings, is perhaps the most subtle and effective form of power' (Adler, 1997: 336). Power is therefore seen as the 'central link between the construction of knowledge and social order... First, people are attributed labels [which affect how they perceive themselves and how others perceive them]... Second, power analysis emphasizes the link ... between the social production of knowledge and collective action. Here the focus is on those social groups empowered to provide the authoritative vision of the world. Both types of power analysis which are profoundly intersubjective link, on each level, the theory of knowledge with social theory' (Guzzini, 2000: 172).

As Prizel suggests in his term 'guardianship of national identity', and as Urban (1998), Ponarin (1999) and Kassianova (2001) have pointed out, this applies to national identity. Defining the national interest and ensuring a successful foreign

policy is considered by members of the nation and outsiders to be the business of officials within the structures of the state. The foreign policy elite consists of those within the formal structures of power who are in the most powerful position to influence the debate and also put into practice what the prevailing concept of national identity suggests is correct foreign policy. State officials are considered not only by other members of the nation, but also by other state officials in the outside world, to be responsible in this way. Thus the foreign policy elite adopt responsibility for interpreting history and of interpreting ongoing interactions with others. 'Since the state is the central site at which national interest is defined, the most important language is that of state officials' (Weldes, 1999: 112).

Thus the focus of empirical research is on the statements and actions of the elite. The relevant elite is, however, broader than the membership of official policy-making circles. As well as the state foreign policy elite, various other people are influential in national identity because the Russian national identity debate includes the input of a variety of authoritative voices. The wider cultural elite of journalists, academics and religious figures is influential because it adopts and is accorded the authority to expound upon issues of national significance.

The elite can be conceived of as being of primary importance in the study of identity formation, which is 'particularly important in newly emerging or re-emerging states, since nationalism and national identity are often the main if not the sole force binding these societies together... Nationalism and national identity are the glue that gives coherence to... all polities' (Prizel, 1998: 2-3).[49,50] In a country such as Russia after the collapse of Communist rule, given the lack of stable 'intermediate associations' between society and government, this elite plays 'an enhanced role in shaping change' (Checkel, 1999: 7).

In every country the relationship between policy decision-makers and the public at large is different (Tsigankov, 2002: 294-295). In empirical work we can find the relevant people who regularly 'produce and express views and evaluations in the area, who are recognised as experts by the official power, or who come out as spokesmen of the legislative power and government in the corresponding area

[49] See also Richter (1996: 71).
[50] See also Elshtain (1995: 349-350).

and who serve the state power at the federal as well as regional levels' (Ossipov, 1999: 183).

In Russia, rapid 'changes in the internal and external environment... led to core changes in foreign policy' (Prizel, 1998: 2). The role played by significant others in the outside world was crucial in this struggle for power. The perceived success or failure of different concepts of national identity were a result of how these interactions with other actors in the international world played out and were interpreted in the domestic debate. There was clearly a confused and highly competitive period in which different groups and their ideas struggled for dominance. This is crucial because a 'shift in the custodianship of national identity [leads to] a shift in the foreign policy orientation' (Prizel, 1998: 3). The competition between the various branches of the elite – between parliament and presidential apparatus, between Foreign Ministry and Defence Ministry for example – was fierce; among other things, over the correct interpretations of national identity; these contests therefore are one area of interest to Chapters 8 and 9.

Roles: national identity and individual action

The link between individual actors and intersubjectively shared understandings can be understood through the concept of roles. This shows how individuals are both influenced by and influence the terms of the national identity debate. The 'custodians' of national identity are influenced to act in certain ways (in carrying out foreign policy, and, in turn, interpreting its results) because, as constructivists argue, the world is given meaning – makes sense – because of the way it is interpreted by individuals. These interpretations are based on identity, and operate as road maps to understanding 'reality'. Shared understandings such as national identity reduce the complexity of real-life situations and lead to people acting in fairly predictable ways. National identity therefore provides a basis for behaviour in the international realm. 'Perceptions of the situation in which actors find themselves and the courses of action which they view as reasonable to pursue are constructed in the context of their identities' (Williams & Neumann, 2000: 362). The sudden disappearance of the Soviet empire, heir of the Russian empire, left Russians facing a 'profound identity crisis' (Baev, 1999). As Richter (1996) has

suggested, this leaves elites searching for ideas that legitimise foreign policies. 'It is not... easy to... grasp the logic of action in this process [the quest for non-Soviet legitimisation of the state] without first analysing the corresponding normative vocabulary, ways of perception and evaluation used by the political elite' (Ossipov, 1999: 183)

The logic of appropriateness shows how individuals understand what they should do, and how it is to be made comprehensible to others. The 'self-perceived identity of the actors is central to their understanding of what is appropriate action in a given situation. The logic of appropriateness is intrinsically social and relational: what counts as appropriate action is determined in the context of a social structure within which the actor is located and on the judgement of others... To be recognised as a certain kind of actor is to adhere to the recognised behaviour deemed appropriate to the situation, and thus to be a legitimate actor within it. Undertaking specific actions in that situation is equally a sign of being a particular kind of actor. Analysed in this broadly social context, legitimate identities are inextricably bound to roles, and to structures of power' (Williams & Neumann, 2000: 363-364). Thus the roles adopted by actors, such as foreign policy-makers, result in what is seen as appropriate behaviour. Given that these identities are intersubjectively created, the roles also make sense to other members of society.

Thus the individual's identity reveals itself in the roles he or she performs. These are cultural norms and values, interpreted as 'a national "ideology" or belief system in foreign policy, in the sense that ideas of who "we" are serves as a guide to political action and basic world views... Thus, this conceptual lens through which foreign policy-makers perceive international relations, tends to set the norm for what is considered by themselves "rational" foreign policy-making' (Aggestam, 1999: 5). For Aggestam, '*Role conceptions* suggest how norms and values become operationalised in terms of verbal statements about expected foreign policy behaviour. Role provides an essential link between agent and structure, as it incorporates how foreign policy behaviour is both purposeful and shaped by the institutional context (Aggestam, 1999: 9). As Little (1988: 37) pointed out much earlier, 'the belief system [is] a property of the social group rather than the

individual.[51] It is a 'set of ideas that transcends the individuals who are committed to it... [that makes] otherwise incomprehensible social situations meaningful, to so construe them as to make it possible to act meaningfully within them... The willingness of individuals to conform is hardly surprising given that much individual behaviour only makes sense in the context of an externalised belief system' (Little, 1988: 42-43). Yet members of the elite also try to push forward their own interpretations of what is appropriate as there is not a homogeneous vision of what the national identity is. These debates sometimes resolve themselves into areas of common acceptance, at other times views seem to be irreconcilable.

In practice, perceptions of what is perceived and defined as being acceptable and viable goals and interests in foreign policy – the roles adopted by policy-makers – are clearly identifiable in their language. 'With their successful repeated articulation, these linguistic elements come to seem as though they are inherently or necessarily connected, and the meanings they produce come to seem natural, come to seem an accurate description of reality' (Weldes, 1999: 99).[52] Empirical research aims to show (by analysing elite actors' statements), what they perceive to be their role as foreign policy-makers in relation to certain situations.

The role of the wider population

The elite and their self-conceptions are the focus of a constructivist analysis of this kind, focusing on national identity and foreign policy. But these roles can only be understood in the context of a wider societal debate. In Russia there has traditionally been a specific form of state–people divide, and to many observers that continued into the 1990s. The debate on identity in that period was dominated by elites (Kortunov, 1999: 23). Yet, even in a very elitist society, core values held widely across society are common to all members of the nation.

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[51] See also Carlsnaes (1986), who focuses on ideology.

[52] Similarly, Guzzini uses Bourdieu's concept of a *field* – a social subsystem which is a 'patterned set of practices which suggests competent action in conformity with rules and roles, [and which] relies intrinsically on a historically derived system of shared meanings which define agency and make action intelligible. Being historical, fields are open and change over time' (Guzzini, 2000: 165). Collective memory becomes 'the "natural" way of doing, perceiving and thinking things' (Guzzini, 2000: 166). Williams and Neumann (2000: 360, footnote 16) also draw on Bourdieu for the concept of 'symbolic power', emphasizing 'the power which legitimate conceptions of identity have on what is understood as appropriate action by the actors concerned'.

The elite are not hermetically sealed from the rest of the population. There is a flow, perhaps limited, of people and ideas upwards and across, and there are similarities in educational and cultural experiences. The wider population in Russia in the 1990s was able to express its opinion at least to some extent through opinion polls, the media and elections. The elite and the mass public inevitably share many ideas, owing to their shared historical education. Empirical analysis can show to what extent this was important in the case in question, but the elite cannot push forward any vision of national identity. To some degree, 'interpretations of old traditions and inventions of new ones by intellectuals and politicians "must be consonant not only with the ideological demands of nationalism" but should also fit particular ethno-histories and have a popular resonance' (Tolz, 1998: 269). In Ponarin's (1999: 2) scheme, 'the situation can be pictured as a 'marketplace where "masses" are potential buyers with a certain demand and elites are competing sellers whose profit is political power'. Yet he admits that sellers can 'sometimes shape demand'.

Thus the elite and the wider population are connected to some degree, and 'examining the language of the national interest, whether found in speeches, policy documents, memoirs, or other sources, helps to explain why claims about the national interest are believed. Even the most outrageously cynical statements are powerful because they make sense to at least some in their audiences... even exaggerated "rhetoric" thus provides a good indication of what makes sense in a particular political environment at a particular time' (Weldes, 1999: 114-115).

Empirical research and national identity formation in Yeltsin's Russia

The first point to be established, then, is the nature of the elite and how they entered into the national debate. The relevant influential historical political-cultural debates on Russia's national identity formation in the 1990s – those that were being revived and reinterpreted in the 1990s – will be the next matter to be examined, as will the ideas which became dominant, which parts of the elite espoused the various interpretations, and whether there was a dominant view of national identity and the national interest (see Chapter 7). In specific case studies, an analysis is required of how external actors are perceived: in this case, the manner in which NATO and the EU – two major organizations representing 'the West' – were dealt

with in the Russian domestic debate and how the elite perceived Russia's appropriate actions with regard to them. According to the framework established in this chapter, such perceptions should be founded on the historical debate about national identity.

The evidence for this work comes from the public debates conducted in Russia, mainly by the state and cultural elite. These include debates in the various media, in parliament, and the results of public opinion polls that deal with Russia's place in the world, with ethnicity, borders, on threats and the perception of the major external influences on Russia. One recent empirical approach to using an elite-focused constructivist analysis of Russian foreign policy was undertaken by Kassianova who, in a similar argument to that used here, suggests that the state can be considered as the '*producer* rather than the mediator or arbiter of the identity discourse' (Kassianova, 2001: 825). Her methodology is to focus on 'the texts of major official documents [which] may be singled out as a specific component of the national self-consciousness discourse for they provide a set of authoritative state-sanctioned visions of the principal questions of the state's and nation's objectives and prospects... it amounts to a state-authorised message addressed both inwards, to the nation, and outwards, to the world. In the latter capacity such documents are taken seriously by observers, experts and politicians browsing them for clues to predict the state's behaviour' (Kassianova, 2001: 827). However, the clues as to the significance of these major texts will be found in the wider domestic debate, including by reference to the wider resonance of such ideas in opinion polls and election results. The requirement here is to study documents and speeches from a wider spectrum of the elite, those produced by the institutions of state, the media and by senior politicians, commentators in the major journals and newspapers and academics at the major state institutes, in parliamentary debates, party programmes and in personal memoirs. These were the means by which those with political power to influence the national identity debate did so.

CHAPTER 4
RUSSIA'S POWER RELATIVE TO THE WEST IN THE 1990S

Realists believe that decision-makers must react to the facts of the international distribution of power, and the threats and possibilities that present themselves, to ensure the survival of their state (see Chapter 2). They build domestic strength and carry out diplomacy to ensure, at a minimum, that the position of their state does not worsen relative to other states, with the ultimate goal being either security or hegemony.[53] Domestic politics play a limited role because it is the international distribution of material power that is of paramount importance in determining state strategy.

Realism predicts that leaders will act in a purposeful manner. Policies change rapidly with changes in the environment, but this does not preclude the existence of strategy. The aim of a case-study analysis utilising this view of foreign policy is to 'trace how, in actual cases, relative power is translated and operationalized into the behavior of state actors' (Rose, 1998: 166). This chapter lays the groundwork for the two case-study chapters that follow by examining the key structural factor – the decline in Russia's military and economic capability compared to that of other states and alliances (primarily in relation to the West but also in the wider regional and global view); it also describes the decision-makers and institutions responsible for foreign policy in Russia in the 1990s.

Most realists regard the post-Cold War international structure as unipolar. 'The United States is the first leading state in modern international history with decisive preponderance in *all* the underlying components of power: economic, military and geopolitical' (Wohlforth, 1999: 7). Its one potential competitor had disappeared.

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[53] Offensive realists argue that states will inevitably seek as much power as possible, aiming for hegemony; defensive realists that the ultimate goal is security. In practice, however, policies will usually turn out to be the same, as both scenarios involve a continuous struggle for relative power and position.

Russia and the West in the post-Cold War era – the new distribution of power

The new geopolitical situation

In December 1991 the democratically elected leader of Russia, with his Ukrainian and Belorussian counterparts, signed the decree that officially dismantled the Soviet Union and formed the Commonwealth of Independent States (they were later joined by most other former Soviet republics). The Russian state was reborn in a commonwealth at the heart of a shattered Union.

The geopolitical retreat of the Soviet Union from the West had begun under Mikhail Gorbachev, when the east European countries were allowed to secede from Moscow's control and Moscow accepted unwillingly that Germany would be reunited within NATO. At a party plenum, on 25 December 1989, Gorbachev claimed that 'the inclusion of a united Germany in NATO would represent an unacceptable "shift in the balance"',[54] and he also stated that his hope was for 'new structures created within a pan-European framework' (Gorbachev, 1997: 683). However, Germany was indeed reunited within NATO, and NATO remained vigorously alive.

In December 1991, Russia had to face up to the fact that the USSR (successor to the Russian empire) was no more, the former Soviet republics were independent, and Moscow was no longer the centre of a superpower state. Russia's borders were those of many centuries earlier, and new states had appeared on those borders in huge territories that had previously been under Moscow's control. Many of these territories the Russians considered to be historical homelands – parts of Russia – such as the Crimea, Belarus and the Ukraine. Areas with large, densely settled Russian populations, such as northern Kazakhstan, Moldova and the Baltic republics, were now also found in independent states.[55] The military and economic infrastructure built up by the Soviets was left stranded in various parts of the former Soviet Union.

The collapse of the USSR led to plans to withdraw a 500,000-strong army from the territory of Soviet allies in Europe. Russia indeed began to withdraw its

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[54] Cited by Wohlforth (1993: 286).

[55] Many millions of Russians were left outside the country's borders; the precise number was uncertain, as the definition of 'Russian' was unclear. The number usually quoted is 25 million (see Chapter 7, footnote 2).

armed forces far away from the centre of the continent, in a situation in which pay or even housing could not be guaranteed for the troops. From the Western perspective, Russia offered a much reduced conventional military threat. From Russia's point of view, 'for the first time in 300 years (in peacetime) the Moscow military district has turned from the deep rear into the advanced defense line of Russia' (Arbatov, 2001: paragraphs 13-15). The separation from Western Europe did have one military advantage in that it created a barrier between the military forces of the Western powers and Russia in case the former did harbour hostile intentions. This buffer zone would disappear, however, if the eastern European states allied themselves with NATO.

As Russia moved further away from Europe, its routes to the sea were restricted. Russian ships seeking access through the Baltic, because of the shallowness of the Gulf of Finland, depended on the good will of Estonia and Finland (Jonson, 1997: 311). This situation, coupled with an unsatisfactory deal with Ukraine on the Black Sea Fleet, increased the significance of the east of the country and the ocean outlets in that direction (Chung, 1999: 266), although the Pacific Fleet also fell into disrepair.

Despite these facts, Russia was by far the most powerful state in the former Soviet empire militarily and economically. It was the legatee of the Soviet Union's international treaties, and the inheritor of its arsenal of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. Russia remained a gigantic country and regional power with an area of 17 million square kilometres, almost as large as the United States and Canada combined.

Russia's economic collapse

The Soviet Union's economic situation was very poor even before Gorbachev came to power, and this was one of the most important factors motivating his reforms. Yet these reforms and the shock therapy of Yeltsin and his reformist government, begun in January 1992, caused an economic catastrophe.[56] Between 1989 and 1994 Russia's gross domestic product (GDP) fell by almost half, while annual inflation

[56] It is clear that Gorbachev and then Yeltsin were right to attempt some reinvigoration of the Soviet economy. But the shock therapy begun in 1992 was ineptly and corruptly carried out.

averaged 230% (Mason & Sidorenko-Stephenson, 1997).[57] Russia's real GDP (US$ at 1996 prices), dropped from around US$ 700 billion in 1988, to less than US$ 600 billion in 1992, continuing its decline to around US$ 420 billion in 1995, then holding steady before dropping again to a decade low of US$ 400 billion in 1998, before starting to rise again.

There were signs of stability and even some growth in the mid-1990s – in 1997, it was felt that 'parts of the officially measured economy may be rebounding' (*Russian Economic Trends*, 1997: 3) – but the 1998 crash followed, another serious setback, before the economy again embarked on a period of growth, helped by high oil prices. Examining the percentage change in GDP (real change per annum) is another way of viewing the picture and shows the same pattern. The change was –5% in 1991, –14% in 1992, -13% in 1994, -5% in 1995, then +1.38% in 1997 with, again, a decline of 5% in 1998, and a decline of 6% in 1999.[58] In sum, an important part of Yeltsin's legacy 'is an economy only about half of the size of the one he inherited' (Ellman, 2000: 1420). As Putin said in 1999, '"in the 1990s the Russian GDP fell almost 50%. By size of GDP we lag 10 times behind the USA and five times behind China. After the crisis of 1998 the per capita GDP fell to about 3500 dollars. This is approximately one-fifth of the average of the G-7"' (cited by Ellman, 2000: 1420).[59]

Part of the reason for Russia's calamitous economic performance was the break-up of the Soviet communications and resource-allocation system. Some 40% of Soviet GDP was accounted for in the CIS and Baltic countries (Trenin, 1996: 33). This suggested a need for some form of economic reintegration in the CIS, although many argued that in fact the CIS would be a drain on the Russian economy, as these republics had been in Soviet times.

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[57] See also Rogov (1997) and Reddaway & Glinski (2001) for an extended analysis along these lines.

[58] All of these figures are taken from The Economist Intelligence Unit. Online at: http://www.eiu.com.

[59] Lieven's (1999: 186-187) view was that, 'By the year 2000, if present trends continue, Russian GNP will be only twice that of Poland which renders absurd the idea that Russia could once more in the foreseeable future dominate Central Europe'.

Economic decline relative to the West

During the 1990s, meanwhile, the 15 EU states were demonstrating very different economic results: GDP in the 15 EU states (US$ at PPP) in 1991 was 6,404 billion (when Russia's was 1,148 billion); it was 7,432 billion in 1995 (when Russia's was 819 billion), 8,461 billion in 1998 and 8,780 billion in 1999 (when Russia's had shrunk to 856 billion). The only year showing negative growth was 1993 when GDP (% real change per annum) was -0.04%. The EU's GDP per head (US$) in 1991 was 18,950 (when Russia's was 429); in 1995 it was 22,990 (when Russia's was 2,120); in 1999 it was 22,770 (when Russia's was 1,339).[60] Percentage change in GDP (real change per annum) in the EU 15 was fairly steady throughout the decade: 4.5% in 1991, 1.3% in 1992, –0.3% in 1993, 2.8% in 1994, 2.5% in 1995, 2./% in 1997, 2.9% in 1998 and 2.8% in 1999.

The US economy, too, was dramatically different to that of Russia's in the 1990s. Nominal GDP (US$ at PPP) was 5,803 billion in 1990, 6,338 billion in 1992, 7,072 billion in 1994, 7,398 billion in 1995, 7,817 billion in 1996, 8,304 billion in 1997, 8,747 billion in 1998 and 9,268 billion in 1999. In the US, GDP per head was (US$ at PPP) 23,200 in 1990, 23,653 in 1991, 24,671 in 1992, 25,580 in 1993, 26,846 in 1994, 27,753 in 1995, 28,987 in 1996, 30,429 in 1997, 31,679 in 1998, and 33,185 in 1999. In the US, GDP percentage change (real change per annum) was –0.2% in 1991, 3.3% in 1992, 2.7% in 1993, 4.0% in 1994, 2.5% in 1995, 3.7% in 1996, 4.5% in 1997, 4.2% in 1998 and 4.5% in 1999.

Western aid was required to help Russia get through its difficulties, primarily in the form of IMF credits. In 1992, these totalled just over US$ 1 billion, increasing to US$ 1.5 billion in 1994, US$ 5.5 billion in 1995, then down to US$ 3.8 billion in 1996, US$ 2 billion in 1997, US$ 6 billion in 1998, dropping sharply to US$ 645 million in 1999 and to zero in 2000. Russia's IMF debt during the decade, accordingly, rose from zero in 1991 to more than US$ 19 billion in 1998 before beginning a gradual decline. Russia's overall net debt in the same period rose from almost US$ 60 billion in 1990 to more than 160 billion in 1998 before again, making a gradual descent. The IMF's loans were tied to economic developments in the country ('reform') and even to certain figures being retained in key posts in the administration (Anatolii Chubais and Aleksandr Nemtsov being

[60] Figures from The Economist Intelligence Unit. Online at: http://www.eiu.com.

notable examples) which had an influence on Russian domestic politics, as well as providing fuel to critics of Yeltsin's policies. But at the same time the loans turned out to be disappointing, materialising in quantities that when broken down over time, and taking into account repayments, were far less impressive than the huge numbers occasionally trumpeted by Western and Russian leaders.[61]

Social misery, a population in decline

These economic data show clearly how the gap between Russia and the West in economic terms grew dramatically in the 1990s. But Russia's economic statistics also spelt social misery, collapsing infrastructure, and an inability to fund military reform, despite the hope pinned on the long-term success of shock therapy. Real wages fell by half between 1991 and 1996 (Mason & Sidorenko-Stephenson, 1997).[62] Arrears of wages between 1992 and 1996 stood at 7.5 billion dollars (Lieven, 1998: 170). The health of the population also suffered enormously during the 1990s. The total population of Russia fell from 148,164 million in 1990 to 147,609 in 1995 (World Bank, 1996).[63] Life expectancy fell from 74.27 for women and 63.79 for men in 1990 to 72.20 for women and 59.00 for men in 2000.[64] According to a report from the World Health Organization (written in 2003), 'in the last decade Russia has been experiencing a shock unprecedented in peacetime to its health and demographic profiles... A combination of a dramatic fall in the birth rate and increasing mortality meant that since the mid-1980s, Russia's population has shown declining growth rates, which became negative in 1992. The size of the population, estimated at 144.8 million in 2000, has fallen by 3.5 million

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[61] IMF figures show that disbursements by the Fund to Russia totalled 719 billion (SDRs [Special Drawing Rights]) in 1992 and 1,078,275,000 in 1993 when Russia paid charges of 56,082,833 SDRs. In 1994 IMF disbursements to Russia totalled the same as in 1993, Russia now paying charges and interest of 122,264,400; in 1996 disbursements totalled 2,578,861,200, while charges paid were 323,567,770. In 1997 disbursements were 1,467,252,800, while charges and interest paid reached 423,093,268; in 1999 disbursements were a mere 471,429,000, while charges and interest paid were *higher* than this sum, at 528,469,919 (figures from the International Monetary Fund. Online at: http://www.imf.org).

[62] See also Rogov (1997: 2) and Reddaway & Glinski (2001: 2).

[63] In the EU 15, by comparison, the population was around 400 million throughout the 1990s. In the US, the population rose from 250.1 million in 1990 to 266.6 million in 1995 and 279.3 million in 1999.

[64] World Health Organization, Office of the European Region Tuberculosis Control Programme, personal communication, 20 August 2004.

in the period 1992–2000 (Tragakes & Lessof, 2003: 11).[65] This decline would have been worse were it not for net immigration in the early part of the decade of ethnic Russians from other former Soviet republics. 'During the 1990s, mortality rose for all age groups except infants and children, and for both sexes, though the increase was far greater for males. The greatest increase in mortality was among males aged 40–49, which nearly doubled (87% increase) in the period 1990–1994. Life expectancy is now among the lowest in Europe, particularly in the case of men, which is almost 13 years lower than the average for the European Union.... Male life expectancy dropped from 63.8 in 1990 to 57.6 in 1994, and it was 59.15 in 2000 (Tragakes & Lessof, 2003: 12). The Russian population was growing in 1990 but by 1995 had stagnated, and in 1999 was falling by 0.40%.[66]

As in many areas of Russian life, the relevant laws relating to health insurance looked excellent on paper. The relevant law was "On Health Insurance of the Citizens of the RSFSR" of 28 June 1991 (No. 1499-1), 'setting out the basic framework for the establishment of a health insurance system for publicly provided health care services, and amended and reissued on 2 April 1993 (Law No. 4741-1). Reforms of the health system 'were undertaken at a time of great upheaval and in response to pressing demands... The reforms were drawn up with a clear aim of preserving access to a basic package of care for the whole population... This has not proved to be the case [and]... de facto rationing now takes place without scrutiny... as the system comes to be increasingly financed out-of-pocket and under-the-table, in the absence of a formal cost-sharing mechanism in place, equity is clearly being compromised. Health status in the early part of the 1990s was severely affected' (Tragakes & Lessof, 2003: 179).

Economic power relative to the other former Soviet states

The economic statistics throughout the former Soviet Union, excluding the Baltic States, show a similar pattern of sudden economic decline in 1991-1992, followed by halting recovery during the rest of the 1990s. In 1992, all of the countries in the FSU (except Kyrgyzstan) showed enormous drops in GDP, from Georgia and Armenia (percentage real change per annum of -40%) to Kazakhstan and

[65] The report states that 'In 1992, the death rate in the Russian Federation was greater than the birth rate for the first time, and has been so ever since'.
[66] Figures from Economist Intelligence Unit. Online at: http://www.eiu.com.

Turkmenistan (the best performers) with declines of around 5%. In 1993 and 1994 only one or two of all the FSU states showed positive growth, while by 1996 Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan were all registering some sort of growth. But these year-on-year percentage change figures reflect the even worse performance of the previous year (hence Russia's relatively impressive showing in 1999).

In terms of GDP, Russia stood head and shoulders above the other FSU states: in 1999, and despite the disastrous economic performance of the previous decade, GDP stood at 856 billion (US$ at PPP) compared to Ukraine's GDP of US$ 183 billion (US$ at PPP), clear in second place. This difference was actually in many instances greater than earlier in the 1990s because of the poor performance of the FSU states when compared to Russia. Yet GDP per head shows a somewhat different story, and the numbers are closer, though Russia is still the best performer. Russia's GDP per head (US$ at PPP) was 7,896 in 1990, compared to 7,242 in Ukraine and 5,948 in Kazakhstan. By 1995 Russia's GDP per head had fallen to 5,539, Ukraine's to 3,950, and Kazakhstan's to 4,417. Most of the other FSU states hovered around US$ 2,000 in 1995, rising slightly by the end of the decade, while Russia and Ukraine's GDP per head had not moved upwards much from the 1995 level.[67]

Military weakness, failed reform

One result of Russia's economic collapse was the state's inability to prevent a severe decline in military capability in terms of upkeep of weaponry, research and development, morale and training. Estimates are difficult to make, because of lack of transparency in both Soviet and post-Soviet periods, and complications in rouble : dollar conversions. According to one estimate, however, by the mid-1990s Russia spending 14 times less on defence than the Soviet Union had spent in the 1980s (Trenin, 1996: 33). Another, similar, estimate is that in 1997 the military expenditure of Russia and the former Soviet states was around one tenth that of the USSR in 1988.[68] The USSR had been spending around 7-13% of its GDP for military purposes up until the 1990s, a huge sum compared to other states in the

[67] Figures from The Economist Intelligence Unit. Online at: http://www.eiu.com.
[68] Data from GlobalSecurity Org (2004), *Russian Military Budget*. Online at: http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/ra/mo-budget.htm.

world, while the US had been able to maintain its forces at equivalent levels with a far lower percentage of its GDP. With the foundation of the Russian Federation, military expenditure dropped to 5.5-2.8% of GDP by the late 1990s. Owing to the fact that GDP itself had dropped dramatically, there was in fact a 70% decrease in real defence spending in the 1990s. The year-by-year figures show that spending (by constant US$) fell precipitously in 1992 (owing to the cuts in military spending of the reformist government) from US$ 324.5 billion to USS 86.9 billion. The decline continued steadily until a sudden drop in 1995 to USS 46.6 billion, and rising in 1999 to US$ 56.0 billion.[69] One further estimate is that the Russian military budget in 2000 rose to 110 billion roubles, up from 93 billion in 1998 and 81.7 billion in 1999.[70] One outcome was that in Russia between 1988 and 1993, 'weapons production... fell by at least 50% for virtually every major weapons system. Weapons spending in 1992 was approximately 75% less than in 1988'.[71]

Thus there was a steady increase in spending, in 1999 at least, but not nearly enough to balance what the US was able spend on its own military: the 110 billion roubles of 1999 equates to around US$ 4.3 billion (using the exchange rate of 13 September 1999); the US defense budget, meanwhile, had increased from USS 271 billion in 1998, to US$ 280 billion in 2000. By the end of the 1990s the Russian defence budget had 'shrunk to 2 per cent of the American budget' (Arbatov, 2000: paragraph 22). As a result of the devaluation of the rouble in 1998, 'Russia appeared as a country with a GDP less than $200 billion... its defense budget dwindled to a level below $4 billion – two orders of magnitude smaller than that of the United States. The country's annual foreign debt servicing (approximately S17 billion) consumed three fourths of annual federal income' (Pikayev, 2000: 3).

The need for reform

One other result of the gigantic military effort of Soviet times was the vast amount of equipment that had remained. Thus 'Russia also still possesses approximately

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[69] Data from GlobalSecurity Org (2004). *Russian Military Budget.*

[70] Data from *The Military Balance, 1998-1999*: 105-109.

[71] The huge inflation experienced in Russia in the mid-1990s 'rendered formal budgets nearly meaningless' (GlobalSecurity Org, 2004: 2). Moreover, a high level of secrecy remained, so that after 1998 (and a period of relative openness), 'there are only 3 open lines in the military budget, with only one (open [but so general as to be meaningless]) line accounting for 90% of the budget' (Taylor, 2000: 3).

10-30 per cent more military equipment than the United States... [which] only serves to exacerbate the contradiction between the size of the armed forces and the available financial resources for their support' (Locksley, 2001: 9). Such was the miserable condition of the finances for Russia's defence that in the summer of 1996 the Moscow military district filed a court case against the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Finance to force them to pay servicemen's wages. The Russian military went through a grotesque series of catastrophes, with examples of the effects of lack of funds being daily reported in the media. The 10th Guards Tank regiment, brought back from Potsdam, for example, returned to find no quarters for the men. In the army, problems of morale, hunger, often murderous bullying and so on meant that 'soldiers are mostly unwilling to serve and there is much mutual antipathy. The officers not sunk into apathy and disillusion are divided on the future direction of the service and, increasingly, between those who are cynically profiting from the crisis and those who struggle to make ends meet and act professionally' (Dick, 1997: 9).

The case for a smaller, more efficient and less expensive armed forces was clear to the foreign policy elite. It resulted from economic weakness and modern warfare requirements – NATO's new strategy, unveiled in 1991 was also calling for such reformed forces. 'Military reform was required to produce a significant diminution in the size of the defence budget... the Russian armed forces must become an affordable institution for the Russian state and society during times of economic uncertainty while being capable of handling all possible threats and military contingencies' (Locksley, 2001: 5)[72]. However, 'without military reforms you cannot conduct an economic reform because you have a tremendous hole in the federal budget... The gap is widening between the budget and the force structure which the military wants to keep' (Rogov, 1997: 2).

Moreover, 'the military legacy of the Soviet Union... bore no relation either to Russia's current geo-strategic position and economic capabilities or to those vital national interests which might need to be defended by military means... Russia, which represents slightly above 50 per cent of the territory and population of the former USSR, inherited roughly 80 per cent of its armed forces and defence industry. This, together with deep economic crises, a dramatic decline in GNP and

[72] See also Grau & Thomas (1996: 447).

falling industrial production, has predefined a widening gap between the armed forces and the state... the new Russian state is definitely unable to maintain this military heritage and urgently needs to bring the Soviet military legacy into line with its security interests and economic capabilities' (Konovalov, 1997: 196).[73]

Against this background can be seen the keenness with which the Russian leadership quickly sought cuts in nuclear weaponry. Yeltsin announced in January 1992 that by reducing the number of nuclear weapons, while retaining their deterrent effect, substantial savings could be made. Under START-2 Russia's strategic arsenal would be reduced to 3,000 warheads.[74]

The desperate need for reform was expressed frequently by Yeltsin, Minister of Defence Pavel Grachev[75] and others. Reform meant a reduction in the numbers of serving personnel and nuclear warheads in order to have less of everything but improve the quality of what there was; a more modern, professional force; and updating of equipment to keep pace with potential rivals. Russia also needed to begin a process of military reform at the same time as NATO countries (with the USA to the fore) were undertaking some extremely technologically advanced and expensive new military developments, which threatened to widen further the military imbalance, not least National Missile Defence (NMD). The first stage of Grachev's programme 'envisaged a "reform" of the General Staff of Russia's Armed Forces and the so-called "central apparatus" of the Defense Ministry with a planned 50 percent reduction in personnel. During the second stage of reform, due to take place from 1993 to 1995... a new "rapid-deployment operational command" would be established. From 1993 to 1995 the Russian Armed Forces were to have been "rebuilt" with the number of servicemen cut to 2.1 million by 1995 (Felgenhauer, 1997: 3).

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[73] Felgenhauer (1997: 2) argued similarly that 'Russia inherited an armed force built to fight and win an all-out global war. After the Cold War suddenly ended, however, the Russian military was left with a shambles of an army and a totally confusing military doctrine.'

[74] *Izvestiia* reported, on 20 December 1992, that 'The US and Russia... will own about 3,500 nuclear warheads by 2003... the treaty might be implemented by 2000 if the general state of the Russian economy allows it to carry out this work quickly.... Russia and the US will not only cut their "powder kegs" by two thirds, they will also destroy their most destabilising forms of armaments – heavy intercontinental [missiles]... in the absence of full information about the results obtained, even thought this might sound over grandiloquent, one can confidently say, that 2-3 January 1993 will remain historic days, printed in history as days when the two largest nuclear powers took a decisive step towards a safer world.'

[75] Grachev was Minister of Defence from 1992 to 1996.

These facts were also acknowledged in the major policy documents. Thus, for example, the 1997 National Security Concept document stated that: 'The main objective of the organizational development of the Russian Federation Armed Forces and other troops is to create and develop troops (forces) capable of defending the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of the country, the security of the citizens, and the other vitally important interests of society and state in line with the military-political and strategic situation in the world and the real potential of the Russian Federation'.

Effective military reform proved impossible for various reasons, however. 'Without clear-cut guidelines, not knowing what kind of enemy to counter, with President Yeltsin as a commander in chief who is unwilling to give extensive political leadership to the armed forces, and with utterly insignificant budget funding, the Russian armed forces under Grachev had no chance to "reform" in any meaningful way' (Felgenhauer, 1997: 4). Moreover, according to Felgenhauer, members of the General Staff were sabotaging reform efforts to buy time until a future rise in budgetary resources. Yeltsin admitted failure in February 1995 when he said that 'the army has begun to fall to pieces'.[76] In March 1996, Yeltsin declared that 'military reform made practically no headway in 1995 and said that he would press for the creation of a "combat-ready, professional army"' (RFE/RL, 1 March 1996). In May 1996, however, he stated that 'Russia must ensure its military security despite the reduction in international tension since the end of the Cold War... [and] condemned plans to expand NATO eastward, saying that the West is trying to "reinforce its world leadership", by advancing "the NATO military machine to the east". He said that Russia must reform its military to adjust to its new strategic situation. Instead of "hundreds of divisions which only exist on paper", he said, "what we need is a few dozen divisions made up entirely of professionals' (RFE/RL, 30 May 1996). In June 1996 Grachev was sacked.[77]

Failure to carry out such reforms led to the frustrated comments by Yeltsin in a radio message on 28 February 1997 that 'The financing of the army has improved, but not enough so far... it is equally important to use more thriftily the

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[76] Cited in Felgenhauer (1997: 7).

[77] The new Defence Council also pushed for reform, while clashing with the Ministry of Defence. The need to reduce spending was again given as the reason why this was essential (Felgenhauer, 1997: 13).

money which our society can realistically spend on defence needs today. And this is possible only with the start of a genuine, deep reform'. In July of the same year he called for support for reforms, promising soldiers a better life if they backed him. In some ways the situation actually grew worse, owing to the proliferation of (and increase in numbers of personnel manning) the other armed services, such as the interior troops, border troops, and the Federal Agency for Government Communications and Information troops.

The failure to reform was a result of domestic political and economic circumstances. The economic situation meant that cuts took place, but they were not part of a general reform effort. The infighting between ministries was a primary cause, as was lack of decisive leadership from the top. For one thing, Yeltsin needed the support of the military, especially after the October 1993 showdown between himself and parliament. This compromised the leadership's ability to effect change. The Chechen disaster compounded the crisis situation in the army that prevented well-thought-out reform from taking place.

Military comparison with the West

One reason why reform and reinvigoration of the Russian armed forces was so important was because of the new military distribution of power in Europe. NATO's military forces in comparison to those of Russia were well trained, well maintained and technologically advanced. The greatest burden was borne by the US. In 1990 the total defence expenditure of European NATO countries was around US$ 186 billion US dollars. US military spending was US$ 306 billion; in 1995 the figures were US$ 184 billion and US$ 279 billion respectively; in 1999, US$ 180 billion, and US$ 281 billion respectively. In the late 1980s 'the European countries controlled merely 4.6 percent of the world reserves of nuclear weapons while the United States controlled 46.8 percent and the Soviet Union 45.8 percent' (Inozemtsev, 2002: 128).

US military spending was far higher than that of Russia – or that of any other state in the world – in the 1990s. This was in spite of the 'peace dividend' to

be expected after the end of the Cold War.[78] In 1993, the US administration requested US$ 281 billion, a decline of 4.5% in real terms from 1992 which represented, perhaps, this 'peace dividend'.[79] In 1997, the Clinton administration's budget request for the 1998 fiscal year was US$ 265.3 billion, to which Congress added US$ 2.3 billion. The budget in 1998 was US$ 271 billion in 1998, up to US$ 280 billion in 2000.

The upshot of this was that, although 'since the late 1980s NATO has cut its force structure and weaponry by about 25-30 percent... it retained the essence of a collective defense organization with the most developed countries in North America and Western Europe accounting for about half the global GDP, approximately 60 percent of world military expenses and 80 percent of international expenditures on defense-related research and development. In conventional weapons, accountable under the CFE Treaty, NATO now enjoys a three-to-one superiority over Russia, while in previous decades the Soviet Union dominated the European military balance. The Alliance possesses the only efficient integrated defense organization capable of using military coercion if necessary (Rogov, 1999: 2-3).

Russia did have its superpower-sized stock of nuclear (and chemical and biological) weapons. The early stages of the development of the NMD system in the US, however, threatened even this advantage. While NMD remained unproven and unpredictable, it was a disquieting development, boding ill for the future of Russia's ultimate deterrence, and if nothing else, demonstrating the difference in research potential between the US and Russia. Thus NMD was an important diplomatic aspect of the 1990s when the US Government was aiming for alterations to the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) treaty in order to allow the development of NMD.

The decline from superpower to local power

Russia was a severely weakened superpower, whose economic and military might was clearly outweighed by that of the Western countries and their alliances. But it

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[78] The imbalance therefore increased in the 1990s despite the fact that in the immediate post-Cold War environment, US commentators were noting that 'real reductions in military expenditure [had] become possible because of the ... disappearance of the "Soviet threat"' (*Izvestiia*, 6 January 1992).
[79] Data from *The Military Balance 1992-1993*: 16.

was at the same time the most powerful legatee of the Soviet Union – a local and Eurasian powerhouse. It remained easily the most powerful state economically in the CIS. Militarily too, Russia dominated the former Soviet Union. This was down to both conventional and nuclear power. Nuclear weapons were removed from the territory of Belarus, Ukraine and Kazakhstan to Russia (although the threat of returning nuclear missiles to Belarus was sometimes made).[80] Russia also acceded to most of the USSR's international commitments, 'most importantly in the military and security areas. Consequently, Russia has assumed the USSR's posture as a major power in the East of Europe' (Krivosheev, 1997: 186).

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Moscow controlled forces that were a pale shadow of Soviet times. It was in the West, and with regard to NATO, that the imbalance was most stark and where Russia's weakness was most clear (Trenin, 2001: 145). As regards the EU there was little military aspect to the relationship; but the EU's economic might also provided a clear contrast to Russia's steep decline. 'The collapse of the Soviet Union produced the greatest change in world power relationships since World War II. With Moscow's headlong fall from superpower status, the bipolar structure that had shaped the security policies of the major powers for nearly half a century vanished, and the United States emerged as the sole surviving superpower' (Wohlforth, 1999: 5).

The threats to the new state were conceived in very different ways by different actors, but there were some obvious facts that had to be dealt with. Rough consensus soon emerged on what these threats were and agreement was reached on the general outlines of a foreign policy strategy for Russia, which changed from pro-Westernism to a more independent and balanced approach that emphasised Russian national interests. The consensus suggested a need for unsentimental and realistic cooperation with the West, limiting of the possible negative effects of the

[80] The issue of nuclear weapons was dealt with by a number of agreements in December 1991. 'The timetable for the relocation of tactical weapons was achieved ahead of schedule; the transfer of strategic weapons to Russia was completed in November 1996' (Sakwa & Webber, 1999: 382). Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine all acceded to the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

enlargement of NATO and the EU, consolidation of Russian dominance of the former Soviet Union, and the rebuilding of trade and political contacts which had been broken at the end of the Cold War. This consensus, or compromise, was to a great extent a result of the inescapable and harsh realities of the international distribution of power. The devil, however, was in the detail.

The foreign policy elite and institutions

Elite continuities

The end of the Soviet Union caused a revolution in Russia in that it destroyed the all-Union organs of power and removed the very highest ranking leadership of the old state. Yet the second, and later third tier of nomenklatura, 'younger and more dynamic' (Lieven, 1999: 65), as well as many of the managers of large industrial enterprises, stepped into their shoes. As Sakwa (1996: 61) puts it, 'Yeltsin decapitated the political leadership of the old regime and placed himself at the head of its elite hierarchy'. Many would conclude that 'it is the extent of elite continuity that distinguishes Russia's political transformation',[81] but it is continuity of a specific character.[82]

The President was constitutionally the most powerful figure in the country, particularly after October 1993 and the adoption of the new constitution.[83] But Yeltsin's habit of attempting to balance (or see-saw) the conflicts going on beneath him, led to confusion and duplication in policy-making. It was clear, however, that

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[81] Lilia Shevtsova, cited in Lieven (1998: 165).

[82] The nomenklatura was of course the Soviet appointments system, a list of approved names; but the term implies a wider network of personal relationships, 'clans' and patronage. The former nomenklatura have been identified as forming a sort of social class (see for example, Sakwa [1996: 160-161]), such that 'although the communists and their allies have a majority of seats in the Duma... its leaders share many values with the elite, especially the perception that there is a gulf between the elites and the masses' (Jensen, 1998d: 2). Others suggest that in fact the alliance among the members of the new elite is closer than this (Reddaway & Glinski [2001]; see also Lieven [1999: 370]). Further evidence comes from the voting records of such 'opposition' parties as Zhirinovsky's Liberal Democrats and the Communist Party, both of which consistently supported the government when it counted, for example on budgets, the war in Chechnya, and so on. Yet the struggle was in many ways genuine, even if cooption succeeded in many instances, and is best characterised as one of conflict within the new elite.

[83] The President is head of state (Article 80.1 in the 1993 constitution). Article 80 goes on to state that the President 'determines the fundamental course of the state's domestic and foreign policy' and 'as head of state represents the Russian Federation... in international relations'; article 86 specifies that the President 'exercises leadership of the foreign policy of the Russian Federation; 86a that he conducts negotiations, signs international treaties... and instruments of ratification... and accepts letters of diplomatic accreditation' (*Konstitutsiia Rossiskoi Federatsii*, 1996).

on major issues he was the reference point from which the Foreign Minister, Defence Minister and military chiefs had to obtain support. Unfortunately, his influence was often inimical to clear policy-making.

Allies of Yeltsin who headed important agencies in the early years, like Gennadii Burbulis, who directed the State Council and became a kind of overseer of foreign policy in 1992, and Anatolii Chubais, in charge of privatisation and later a First Deputy Prime Minister, took on vital roles. Some were old colleagues from Sverdlovsk, others from the democratic movement in Moscow, yet others (like Egor Gaidar) were plucked from academia. But a very large proportion of those filling middle and low level ranks in the political and bureaucratic structures had done so under the old regime.[84] Moreover, the high positions of government began to be taken over by representatives of the old guard, beginning in December 1992 with the appointment and ratification of Chermomyrdin as Prime Minister.[85]

According to one study, 19% of the 1988 elite were in leading positions of private business in 1993; 48% of the 1988 group were still in the political elite in 1993' (Jensen, 1998d: 1). Kryshtanovskaya presented survey results in 1996 showing that '75% of the new political elite and 61% of the new business elite comes from the Soviet nomenklatura, businessmen mainly from Komsomol (38%) and economic positions (38%) in the old nomenklatura. She stressed the role played by a few leading banks favoured by the government in unifying the new elite' (RFE/RL, 12 January 1996). The founders of 'financial-industrial groups' and other beneficiaries of what came to be known as insider privatisation often

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[84] Others suggest that far from simply reacting quickly to the new circumstances, and being in a position to profit, the old nomenklatura was the very engine of a 'bourgeois revolution: the "second Russian revolution" was in fact a revolution in which a younger generation of the *nomenklatura* ousted its older rivals... [It] led to a shift of power into property, based upon the privatisation of the key sectors of the infrastructure: finance, retail trade, international economic relations, and the most profitable sectors of industry' (Kryshtanovskaya & White, 1998: 97; see also Jensen [1998d: 1], Reddaway & Glinski [2001], Simonia [2001: 269] and Hoffmann [2002]).

[85] According to Willerton, Yeltsin also relied on a network of longer-term protégés or associates from his past, though augmented by his new allies in industry, extractive sectors and former Party apparatus, particularly in the presidential administrative structure. Thus, 'while a significant number of Sverdlovsk associates assisted Yeltsin in his early years as Russian President, many failed to survive even the first year of the post-Soviet transition. Those who did survive tended to hold administrative support positions for Yeltsin rather than wielding major decision-making power in the government' (Willerton, 1998: 75).

came from levels of the Communist Party below the top rank, or from the Komsomol or outside the Party.[86]

Many of the top economic managers of the Soviet period retained their positions in the new regime, converting power into property. A powerful group within the new elite, many controlling and holding large stakes in enormous economic resources, came from the ranks of the 'Red Directors' (directors of large industrial concerns on Soviet times, often the beneficiaries of privatisation). Chernomyrdin's appointment was an apparent victory for the new sectoral elite against both 'reformers' like Gaidar, whom he replaced, and the free marketeers, like Chubais, who represented the interests of many of the oligarchs. New Yeltsin allies in 1992-1995 tended to be linked to powerful economic sectors, like Deputy Prime Ministers Vladimir Shumeiko, Aleksandr Zaveriukha and Iurii Iarov. Increasingly, Russian monopolists (mainly in the field of oil and gas) came to influence the process of formulating foreign and security policy. Some of the largest concerns, such as *Gazprom* and *Lukoil*, lobbied for a foreign policy which would serve these interests (notably in the Caspian region). The oil industry also carried out a successful struggle with the Foreign Ministry over the means of securing rights to Caspian hydrocarbon reserves. For instance, the Union Treaty with Belarus 'primarily serves the interests of *Gazprom*, which is interested in a regular functioning of the pipeline crossing the country and going into Europe. *Gazprom* wants good relations with Ukraine and Moldova as well' (Parkhalina, 2002b: 4).

The oligarchs, usually identified as six men, came to symbolise the new Russia,[87] and, it should be noted, came from outside the Soviet elite. All exploited or created links in the confusion of the early post-Soviet period to the political elite, which was the key to cashing in on the bonanza of the early Yeltsin years. The oligarchs gained access to the inner circle of state power and control of the media (being credited with managing Yeltsin's victory in the 1996 presidential election). Boris Berezovskii was briefly Deputy Secretary of the Security Council and chair

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[86] The Komsomol had been given exclusive rights under Gorbachev to set up profit-making concerns, and many of them went on to become the new rich in post-Soviet Russia.

[87] They were: Vladimir Gusinskii, Vladimir Potanin, Boris Berezovskii, Aleksandr Smolenskii, Mikhail Khodorkovskii, and Mikhail Friedman, though sometimes the list includes Moscow mayor Iuri Luzhkov (in, for example, Hoffmann [2002]).

of the CIS Council. Their influence on foreign policy was generally to push for reasonable relations with the West, for business reasons.

The elite represented a variety of interests (including organised crime). Yeltsin's preferred method of rule was to sit above and manage this balancing act. The major feature of the period was the uneven and somewhat chaotic rebuilding of a strong 'vertical state' (Medvedev, 1999: 30). Sakwa (1996: xii) saw the period as witnessing the emergence of a 'hybrid political system... torn between... democracy, state unity, transformative goals, and the simple desire of elites to stay in power'. Vladimir Ryzhkov[88] identifies one of the major themes of Russian state-building in the 1990s as being the victory of bureaucracy over representative and judicial bodies (Ryzhkov, 2000: 12).[89] Victory in the presidential elections of 1996 did briefly reinvigorate the Yeltsin regime, and led to important changes in personnel and the launch of a new round of reforms which ended in failure with the financial crisis of 1998. One might discern here the ultimate victory of a form of statism that emphasises state authority for its own sake.

Many analysts agree that a rough consensus – ideas on which most of the political spectrum could agree – had emerged in the late Kozyrev era, even before the establishment of Primakov at the Foreign Ministry.[90] Where domestic interests coincided, the consensus was strongest. Thus, for example, many in the Duma argued for rearmament programmes for Russia's 'friends' in the Middle East and for the lifting of sanctions on Iraq, as part of a required shift away from an Atlanticist foreign policy. This would enable Iraq to begin exporting its oil profitably again to repay its huge debts to Russia. Obviously 'defence industrialists and officials in this domain are among the most consistent supporters of easing the UN sanctions' (Allison, 1998: 7), as they would profit from an Iraq with hard cash.

A revolution of sorts did take place in 1991, with the reborn Russian republic asserting its independence from the central Soviet structures. However, the

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[88] Himself a deputy in the State Duma.

[89] Others reason that the centre itself weakened during the decade (Robinson, 2000: 37).

[90] Primakov left foreign intelligence to become Foreign Minister (January 1996-September 1998), and later Prime Minister (September 1998-May 1999). For much of his career he was a *Pravda* analyst and correspondent in the Middle East, usually interpreted as involving clandestine work. Later he headed the Institute of Oriental Studies and the Institute of World Economy and International Relations in Moscow. Under Gorbachev he held high-level posts, and made the transition to post-Soviet life as head of the Foreign Intelligence Service. In January 1996 he was a popular choice in the Duma for Foreign Minister, though he initially refused the offer (Mlechin, 1999: 265).

elite dominating the new state was made up of many of the same people who had dominated the old Soviet state. The general picture in the 1990s was of an increase in the power of a conservative old guard at the expense of the reformers. There were striking continuities of personnel. This calls into question the loyalties and possibilities for original thinking among the elite, and would also help explain the move towards a pragmatic nationalist centre ground with which much of the old/new elite was comfortable.

Institutional holdovers

As well as continuities in personnel, there were institutional holdovers, the institutions in which the elite just described operated and managed the levers of state power. 'Nearly all of the institutions of the Soviet state existed for some time after 1991. Most have been modified but few disappeared entirely... While old institutions have disappeared in the Soviet system they have not been replaced by new institutions' (Wallander, 1996: 207-208). The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, for example, simply took over the offices of its Soviet equivalent on Prospekt Mira (Mlechin, 1999: 268).

The President and his administration (a huge body of approximately 1,500 people which often bypassed or competed with the government), the Foreign Ministry, the Ministry of Defence, economic and atomic agencies, regions, the Security Council, the Defence Council, the Council of Ministers, powerful economic interests and Parliament, all vied for power in the new Russia. But during and after the showdown of September 1993, the state did to a certain extent successfully bring power into the central bodies.

Russia found itself emerging from 'the husk of the Soviet Union with a Congress of People's Deputies and a Supreme Soviet with an executive presidency [grafted] onto [the] two-tier parliament, itself an odd structure that blurred the definition of the real separation of powers' (Sharlet, 1993: 318). The constitution inherited from the Soviet era 'was ambiguous. The Congress of People's Deputies was described in Article 104 as the supreme organ of state power. When the executive presidency was later created, a constitutional amendment described the country as having a separation of executive and legislative power. But article 104 was never amended' (Steele, 1994: 283).

There was an inherited problem of a lack of clarity in the jurisdictions of state institutions, a result of the suddenness of the Soviet Union's collapse, which 'had some very serious consequences... the old order in Russia... was not pregnant with a new order' (Reddaway, 1993: 282). In the end the 1993 crisis came about because of the failure to solve these fundamental questions of power. Even after 1993, 'the system could not at any stage be said to have settled into a regular, readily comprehensible system, as different players came and went, and the power of different institutions waxed and waned, which was perhaps normal for a state undergoing such a sudden transition'.[91]

The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs had already been in flux before the Soviet system came crashing down. The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs also went through several years of turmoil, but Russia, perhaps surprisingly, made do with only three Foreign Ministers during the 1990s (Andrei Kozyrev, 1990-1996; Evgenii Primakov, 1996-1998; and Igor Ivanov, 1998-).

The Foreign Ministry at first comprised no more than 70 people, later (in November 1991) 240, and eventually, 'about 3,200 in October 1992, not much less than the 3,700 in the Soviet ministry in November 1991' (Sakwa, 1996: 281).[92,93] Soviet diplomats traditionally graduated from the Higher Diplomatic School (HDS), later Diplomatic Academy (1974), 'which trained Communist Party recruits to 'reinforce' the diplomatic service. The latter were trained at the Moscow State Institute of International Relations... The Moscow State Institute of International Relations (MGIMO) was the *alma mater* for the majority of the Soviet diplomatic corps, government elite, academicians and international journalists' (Tiouline,

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[91] Tatiana Parkhalina, interviewed by the author, Moscow, 12 July 2002.

[92] On 18 December 1992 Yeltsin 'brought the Soviet diplomatic service under Russian control, and on 22 December the Soviet foreign and defence ministries were abolished. The Soviet Ministry of External [economic] Relations was merged with Russia's... Yeltsin placed himself in direct control of the Russian foreign ministry, and Burbulis took over routine operations. Russia inherited the mantle of responsibility and sought international recognition of its status by being acknowledged as the primary successor state' (Sakwa, 1996: 277-278).

[93] Kozyrev said in 1992 that 'up to 60 percent of the Foreign Ministry apparatus are either people totally demoralized by the system with cynical attitudes or are members of the direct political opposition' (interviewed in *Nezavisimaia Gazeta*, 1 April 1992; cited in *Russia and Eurasia Documents Annual, 1992*). *Nezavisimaia Gazeta* (in which Boris Berezovskii had a controlling stake) was edited by Berezovskii's ally Vitalii Tretiakov (Fossato and Kachkaeva, 1998).

1999: 175). These bodies were responsible for training the vast majority of those diplomats in influential positions in the 1990s.[94]

Under Kozyrev (and afterwards to a lesser extent) various bodies undermined the predominance of the Foreign Ministry in the field of Russian diplomacy. Some of these were charged with overseeing the ministry's work (such as the Security Council), some simply acted in direct competition with it (including at times the Ministry of Defence, the nuclear energy agency, MinAtom, and private companies like Lukoil). Others, notably Parliament, subjected Kozyrev and the ministry in general to withering attack. It has been argued that after 'changes among the top Foreign Ministry officials in 1995, the first steps were taken to overcome the fragmentation... of Russian foreign policy. Since then [the Foreign Ministry] has concentrated increasingly on defending the national interests of Russia. There was a slow turn in Russia's policy on Asia – an intensification of the Russian presence in the Middle East, the establishment of a strategic partnership with China in April 1996, the first steps towards a normalization of relations with Japan and the first serious efforts to create the preconditions for integration with individual CIS states' (Simonia, 2001: 273).

Yeltsin seemed to heed the problem of fragmentation when, in March 1995, he 'issued a new "Statute on the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs" that consolidates its authority over all aspects of foreign policy and made the [Foreign Ministry] directly responsible to the President. The Russian press has interpreted this decree as sharply enhancing the foreign ministry's role in coordinating both the strategy and implementation of foreign policy, but has voiced skepticism over how well it will be observed' (Petro, 1997: 98-99). Later that year (26 December 1995) a new body headed by the president, the Council on Foreign Policy, was founded with the stated goal of coordinating the functions in the foreign policy of the Russian Federation. The Council included the ministers of foreign affairs, defence, foreign economic relations, CIS affairs, finance, the intelligence chiefs 'and the "apparatus" of the President's Assistant on Foreign Policy (Dmitrii Riurikov). It was supposed to become a "superagency" to assist the President in the conduct of foreign policy, and co-ordination of foreign policy efforts of separate agencies,

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[94] According to Parkhalina (interviewed by the author, Moscow, 12 July 2002) this explains the persistence of Soviet-style anti-Western attitudes in the diplomatic corps in the 1990s.

including the Foreign Ministry' (Rodin, 1996). The creation of the Council on Foreign Policy 'reflected Yeltsin's attempt to concentrate foreign policy decisionmaking in his own hands, in an effort to impose order on the chaotic Russian foreign policy process' (Sakwa, 1996: 284-285).

That same month, Yeltsin officially declared his 'dissatisfaction' with Foreign Ministry performance and mentioned the 'strengthening' of the Ministry. The end came for Kozyrev only a few weeks later.

With the appointment of Primakov, the Foreign Ministry was able more clearly to play its role as formulator of Russian foreign policy. This was a result of Primakov's authority and popularity among the elite and in parliament. A Presidential Decree of 1996 officially backed up his position, stating that the foreign ministry was to be the 'primary coordinator of foreign policy' (Tiouline, 1999: 186). In the mid-1990s, then, under Primakov (and beyond, into Ivanov's period), the ministry established a more solid position in relation to other government agencies.[95] Igor Ivanov provided a stable foreign policy, 'consensus' style, and thus continuity from the Primakov period.

The Ministry of Defence, army and security services

Yeltsin had ordered the creation of a Russian Army, on 7 May 1992, (Russia was one of the last CIS states to form a national army) with himself as Commander-in-Chief. On 18 May, General Pavel Grachev was appointed Minister of Defence and 'pledged to maintain Russia as a military "Great Power" and to call a halt to the strategic retreat begun by Gorbachev' (Sakwa, 1996: 302). The head of the Ministry of Defence therefore remained a soldier, as in Soviet times, and under Grachev (1992-1996), Igor Rodionov (1996-1997) and Igor Sergeev (1998-) struggled with military reform. It was a conservative body involved, as was to be expected, in matters of defence and security in foreign affairs.

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[95] In 1996 a Presidential decree stated that 'The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation shall provide direct implementation of the foreign policy course approved by the President of the Russian Federation. The Foreign Ministry of Russia shall be in charge of coordination of foreign policy activities pursued by federal bodies of executive power and of control over them' (Decree by the President of the Russian Federation of March 12, 1996, #375, "On the Coordinating Role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation during the Conduct of Unified Foreign Policy Line of the Russian Federation").

The military and security services were prominent in foreign policy, using platforms in Parliament and the media. In the Fifth Duma (1995), 370 military figures registered as candidates for election (Sakwa, 1996: 111). The army proved itself very willing to get involved in foreign policy, in the CIS for example, where the Foreign Ministry was initially rather inactive. Several bloody wars in the former Soviet Union had heavy Russian military involvement: Transdniestr, Abkhazia in Georgia, and Tajikistan. At its most basic level, the army's performance in battle has been a foreign policy tool. In Chechnya, where it failed with appalling loss of life, the army's reputation was ruined. Nevertheless it served some purpose, by demonstrating utter ruthlessness and the power to lay waste to any nearby country.

The KGB, broken up and reorganised several times, was overtly involved in politics. Primakov, for example, came to notice in the post-Soviet era as the first head of the successor to the KGB's First Chief Directorate of the KGB, the Foreign Intelligence Service (FIS). In 1993, the FIS published a report attacking NATO expansion as a threat to Russian security – and he did so at a time when the Russian Foreign Ministry was taking a much more conciliatory line. 'On the eve of Yeltsin's visit to Washington in September 1994, Primakov again upstaged the Foreign Ministry by publishing a warning to the West not to oppose the economic and political reintegration of Russia with other states' (Andrew, 1999: 730-731).

Other institutional actors in foreign policy

Several other institutions competed with the Foreign Ministry or worked separately in the field of foreign policy. Many of these were new institutions, created during the 1990s by Yeltsin. The Security Council was the most important of these, established in order to create oversight of foreign policy under Yeltsin's control, as part of his goal of centralisation of policy-making. The new body, according to the Russian constitution (and which was controversially included in the constitution [*Natsionalnaia Sluzhba Novostei*, 1997: 1]) co-ordinates Russia's military strategy and confirms the use of military forces outside Russia. It contains about a dozen members, 'representing the key ministries involved in matters of national security: the Foreign Minister, Minister of Defence, head of the Foreign Intelligence Service, head of Federal Counterintelligence, the Minister of Interior Affairs, the

Minister for Nationalities and Regional Politics, the Minister of Civil Defense and Emergency Situations. As a concession to the legislature, after the Chechen invasion, the heads of both the upper and lower houses... were added' (Petro, 1997:103). The idea was to create a unified policy from the top and put an end to the confusion afflicting foreign policy-making, hence the representation from the major institutions of state power. The Security Council took responsibility for the formulation of the major foreign policy documents of the 1990s.

The Defence Council was set up in July 1996 'to coordinate defence-related policies and programmes' and therefore had an overlapping remit with the Security Council: it was unclear where each has its own exclusive area of concern, and thus exemplified Yeltsin's system of rule. The Defence Council led to, among other things, 'more infighting, this time between Iuri Baturin, Secretary of the Defence Council and the new Defence Minister, Igor Rodionov (Felgenhauer, 1997: 9).

Parliament, as well as influencing the executive through law-making and some oversight powers, contained permanent committees in both the Duma (such as the Committee of Foreign Affairs headed for many years by Vladimir Lukin, the Security Committee, and the Committee on Geopolitics), and in the upper house (Foreign Affairs Committee and Security and Defence Committee). These were often used to advocate policy changes in foreign affairs.

* * *

There was, in sum, a high degree of continuity from the Soviet period with regard to the decision-making elite and institutions of state. By the middle of the 1990s, central control was being reasserted – though in an uneven and often chaotic manner – by the President, through the Foreign Ministry and the Security Council. Nevertheless, the Foreign Ministry was still seriously undermined at times, often acting in competition with the Ministry of Defence and others. The move towards central control improved under Primakov, and policy-making on the major issues became more coherent. Thus while the Russian state could be said to have acted in incoherent fashion at times, there was the potential for consistent policy-making led by the President. The Security Council emerged as the most powerful of the new institutions and, with some setbacks, proved able to coordinate the 'consensus' policy of the mid-1990s.

CHAPTER 5
RUSSIA AND NATO:
THE NEOCLASSICAL REALIST EXPLANATION

Russia in January 1992 was a second-tier state. It was militarily weak compared to the US and NATO – and the gap was growing. Economically, both the US and the EU (not to mention many other states around the world) were outperforming Russia to a great extent and so again the gap was growing. By the end of the decade, the distribution of power between the Western states and Russia was worse than in 1992. Within the former Soviet Union (FSU), however, Russia remained easily the most powerful state both militarily and economically.

NATO was the means by which the US, Canada, and their European allies had maintained forces in Europe to defend against the threat of the USSR. After the disappearance of the USSR, two major strategies marked the change from the past: NATO's enlargement into central and eastern Europe, and out-of-area operations, which were undertaken in the former Yugoslavia. These strategic moves, as well as the bombing of Iraq, US plans for a renewed "Star Wars" programme and the downplaying of the CSCE/OSCE,[96] were the major influences on the shift in relations between Russia and the West generally and between Russia and NATO specifically.

Following the neoclassical realist framework of Chapter 2 and given the facts established in Chapter 4, this chapter will first analyse how Russian policy-makers perceived the changing situation in terms of the altered threat to Russian national security. The first section therefore describes how the material factors outlined in Chapter 4, and the specific policies of NATO, were seen in Russia as representing an increased threat – a threat not only of attack, but of a worsening of Russia's relative position. The following section examines the policies that were carried out in response; the focus will be on whether Russian strategy can be classified as balancing or bandwagoning, what tactics were used to improve

[96] The CSCE became the OSCE on 1 January 1995.

Russia's situation, and whether coherent regional and global policies existed together. In conclusion, it will be possible to see whether and when these tactics were successful in their aims.

Changing perceptions, a consensus on NATO

NATO and the foreign policy consensus

Russia's relations with NATO took place within the overall development of Russian foreign policy, from the 'honeymoon' (when Russian leaders even discussed joining NATO) to 'pragmatic consensus' (when relations were marked by some hostility combined with pragmatism). In the early, heady days of 1992, Russia started out with a generally positive attitude towards NATO. This was true of the President, the reformist government and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Yet from the start many of Russia's elite were extremely sceptical of NATO, and therefore even during the first phase there were many dissenting voices, and a pattern of contradictory and confusing statements on the subject was established. The Russian leadership 'expected the West to reward Russia for helping to defeat Communism by admitting it immediately into the Western community. On December 22 1991, a week before the Soviet flag came down, Yeltsin sent a message to Brussels saying that Russia planned to join NATO soon. It produced such a reaction that two days later he claimed it had been the mistake of a typist, who had left out the word "not"!' (Rogov, 1997: 3).[97]

Military links between Russia and NATO were quickly established. After a visit by Manfred Wörner, NATO's General Secretary, to Moscow in February 1992, the First Military Committee in Cooperation Session was called, to which the Russian Chief of the General Staff was invited. In May 1992, Russian State Secretary and leading light of the reformist government Gennadii Burbulis even suggested that NATO would help Russia with its troop withdrawals from the Baltic

[97] Prior to independence some formal structures had been put in place. In summer 1991, NATO's London Declaration established the basis for diplomatic links between the alliance and former Soviet bloc countries. At Rome in November of that year the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) was established, and in December the North Atlantic Council (NAC) was inaugurated (later replaced by the Euro-Atlantic Council, or EAPC), with Russia becoming a founding member.

States.[98] There was a sense that (just as Gorbachev had hoped) NATO would reward Russia's benevolent attitude by reforming in such a way as to include Russia within a pan-European security structure. The Russian leadership's persistent attempts to raise the importance of the CSCE/OSCE – of which Russia was a member – and decrease that of NATO was a result of the same desire. The fact that these hopes were not realised caused immediate disquiet.

Russian views on NATO continued to be very uneven throughout the decade, and aggressive and negative pronouncements and policy proposals were found side by side with more positive ones. This was true even when NATO had decided to enlarge, and when the composition of Russian governments had changed to include more 'centrist' and pragmatic figures, notably Primakov. Yet the overall tendency was towards a more negative, hostile tone from 1993. In Parliament and the media the hostility was much more overt and aggressive than in government and the Presidential apparatus. When the government was purged of many of its reformers and a more centrist government established under Chernomyrdin, it simply reflected better the broader elite outlook. Yeltsin himself was particularly prone to sudden changes of tack, but the Russian view was mainly negative as NATO began its expansion plans and out-of-area operations with regard to the former Yugoslavia.

NATO enlargement: an increasing sense of threat

The Kozyrev period

Russia's initial reaction to NATO's assertion that it would not only continue to exist in its current form (though with an altered strategy established at Rome in 1991) but also take in new members was the turning point in the relationship. There had almost immediately been discussion of enlargement after the end of the Cold War: the reunification of Germany within NATO (agreed between Mikhail Gorbachev and Helmut Kohl during the 'Two plus Four' conference in Paris in July 1990) rather than within a new security structure could be seen as the start of the process. The flurry of visits by NATO General Secretary Wörner to East

[98] Yet in October, Yeltsin, linking the issue of Russian troops in Estonia with the fate of the Russian diaspora, announced the suspension of the withdrawal altogether (though temporarily).

European countries in 1991-1992 also suggested that NATO was at least considering forming alliances and partnerships in the East. The Czech Foreign Minister, Jiri Dienstbier, had in fact visited NATO Headquarters for discussions as early as March 1990.

In February 1993 Kozyrev, writing in NATO's own journal, was hinting at the potential pitfalls in the relationship: 'I am worried by how quickly a "school of thought" has sprung up in the West which maintains that it is better to have dealings with a weakened Russia, left alone with its troubles' (Kozyrev, 1993: paragraph 10). Despite NATO's professions of non-aggressive intentions, and its frequently voiced commitment to build 'a stable, peaceful and undivided Europe', many in Russia remained to be convinced by NATO's statements of pacific intent and desire only for democratisation and the stability of eastern Europe (Arbatov et al., 1997: 7).

Senior academic and political voices in the West could be heard suggesting that NATO's primary goal was to protect current and future members from the possibility of a renewed Russian threat in the future. Henry Kissinger, for example, stated in March 1995 that four hundred years of foreign policy 'indicate a certain proclivity' (Kissinger, 1995) on Russia's part.[99] Indeed, 'NATO officials have gone on record that "enlargement will do nothing to dilute NATO's focus" and that following enlargement "the alliance's core mission will remain the collective defense of NATO soil, and the addition of new members will improve its ability to carry out this mission"' (Hillen & Noonan, 1998: 1).

While in the first two years of Russia's independent existence anti-NATO sentiments were relatively restrained among the leadership, many Russians (mainly those outside the immediate decision-making group, often in parliament and the media) quickly took a very negative view of NATO, and there was soon a change across the leadership spectrum as a result of the hints and then concrete affirmations of NATO's intention to enlarge its membership.[100] Yet the uneven tone persisted. On his visit to Warsaw in the summer of 1993, 'Yeltsin effectively said to the president of Poland, Walesa, that the question of its accession to NATO is Poland's choice and not Russia's. The conditions did not allow this idea to

[99] See Chapter 7 for further examples of this school of thought.
[100] Yeltsin even criticised the space-based anti-missile system in February 1992, at his first meeting with Bush as President of independent Russia.

develop... but anyhow, this statement was immediately seized abroad and in Russia and it was presented almost as a sign that Moscow, even if it doesn't support the enlargement of NATO, will not say anything about it' (Primakov, 1999: 226-227). In spring 1993, the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR) visited Moscow and agreed on a cooperation programme with Grachev, the Russian Minister of Defence. Yet in 1993 the general tenor of Russian statements was extremely negative towards NATO, and even Kozyrev talked about the need to "defend Russian national interests at all costs" (Kortunov, 1999: 34). In the autumn of 1993, Kozyrev himself 'started openly to express the idea that a power vacuum was likely to arise along the borders of Russia in the event of a Russian military withdrawal from these states. This power vacuum, he said, might be filled by "other powers, which are not friendly and could even be hostile to Russian interests"' (Jonson, 1997: 319).

Discussion within NATO on enlargement began in 1993 when Wörner, 'expressed himself openly on... the prospect of enlarging NATO's membership' (Primakov, 1999: 228). US President Clinton stated in the autumn of 1993 that expansion was no longer a matter of if but when. This confirmed earlier hints, and after 1994, the process gathered pace. The Brussels Summit declaration of January 1994 included the statement that 'We expect and would welcome NATO expansion that would reach to democratic states to our East, as part of an evolutionary process, taking into account political and security developments in the whole of Europe'.[101]

Russia's 1993 Military Doctrine states, in somewhat obscure style, that 'the existing and potential sources of external military danger for the Russian Federation... [include] the expansion of military blocs and alliances to the detriment of the interests of the Russian Federation's military security', and 'the buildup of groupings of troops (forces) on the borders of the Russian Federation to the point where they disrupt the prevailing correlation of forces'. Thus the 1993 Doctrine[102] did not actually refer to NATO by name, but the implication was clear, if not emphasised – as it would be in the major foreign policy and security

[101] NATO (2000), *Online Library*. Online at: http://www.nato.int/docu .
[102] Defence Minister Grachev introduced the Doctrine in a press conference in November 1993, in which he emphasised that representatives of all government ministries took part in its formulation.

documents of 1997 and 2000.[103] Instead the 1993 document stated that the main challenge to the country's security stemmed from the unfinished nature and instability of democratic institutions of administration and power.

Another example of the shifting weight of elite views on NATO came when, in November 1993, a widely publicized study by the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service (FIS; headed at the time by Primakov) characterised NATO as "the biggest military grouping in the world that possesses enormous offensive potential". It called the Alliance an organization wedded "to the stereotypes of bloc thinking"' (Adomeit, 1995: 48). The basic points made by the report were that: 'in the context of the post-confrontation period and in the absence of so-called bloc-discipline which had existed before the elimination of the WTO... the process of the entry of the central and eastern European states into NATO, its character, time frame, obligations and rights of the new members must take into account the opinions of all interested parties including Russia, the prospect of strengthening the foundations of collective security on the continent, developing European cooperation; only these factors would allow the creation of prerequisites and favourable conditions for the cooperation of the Russian Federation with NATO and their realisation that would allow translation of other relations into real partnership' (Primakov, 1999: 228). As Primakov explains, Yeltsin approved of this report. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, under Kozyrev, distanced itself, but was outmanoeuvred when the report was presented at a press conference in Moscow. Yeltsin quickly and publicly aligned himself with the FIS against the Foreign Ministry.

Yeltsin indeed began to argue extremely aggressively against NATO's enlargement once it was confirmed as official NATO policy. He felt the need to threaten serious consequences if NATO were to enlarge and in December 1994 caused a stir at the CSCE Summit in Budapest by 'refusing to condemn the

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[103] The Outlines of Foreign Policy Concept (adopted by the President in April 1993), and Outlines of the Military Doctrine (adopted on November 2, 1993) 'were a result of a new kind of decision-making in Russia, following the collapse of the Soviet state structure a highly secretive process that became more open later in the decade... The Security Council, with its membership of experts from the foreign and defence ministries, the General Staff, ministries and other committees, the intelligence services and so on, was heavily involved. These two documents were replaced in 2000 by updated versions, which in turn were the result of formulations and debates in the last year or so of the decade' (Nazarkin, 2003: 8).

violence in Bosnia and sharply attacking NATO's plans for a fast-track expansion into the former Soviet satellite states of eastern Europe... Yeltsin mentioned a "cold peace"' (*Moscow Times,* December 8 1994). Yet he showed himself willing to change his stance. This often involved attempts to secure Western aid by invoking the threat of what would occur if he was removed from power.

The Russian leadership hoped to boost instead a pan-European security structure based on consensus – the CSCE of which Russia was a member – which would replace a NATO that created 'dividing lines' in Europe.[104] Russia wanted to see the role of the United Nations and the Security Council in particular maintained and if possible strengthened. An increased role for the CSCE/OSCE was perhaps even more desirable to Russia's leaders than the upgrading of the UN (Pursiainen, 2002: 3). Meanwhile, Russia viewed the 'trend to a unipolar security structure in Europe under US leadership and NATO involvement in "external Euro-Atlantic security matters" as an alarming development that poses a potential security threat to Russia. The military has used that perception to justify badly needed increases in the military budget' (Virtual Information Center, 1999).

Invitations to join the Partnership for Peace (PfP) were first officially made at the NATO Brussels Summit in January 1994, but had been openly discussed since October 1993. The PfP was described by NATO in the usual language of involving a commitment to 'the preservation of democratic societies... freedom from coercion and intimidation, and the principles of international law' and a reaffirmation of 'commitment to fulfil in good faith the obligations of the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights'.[105] The PfP was often seen in Moscow, however, as a vetting procedure for prospective members. This view was later encouraged by the statement in the July 1997 Madrid Declaration on Euro-Atlantic Security and Cooperation, that 'we strongly encourage the active participation by aspiring members in the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and the Partnership for Peace, which will further deepen their political and military involvement in the work of the Alliance'. Some in the Russian leadership certainly viewed it this way. Primakov's published notes, for example, record that 'on Monday, 15 November 1993... I, as director of the

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[104] See, for example, Gareev (1992: 543) and Konovalov (1997).
[105] NATO (2000), *Online Library*. Online at: http://www.nato.int/docu.

[Foreign Intelligence Service] was with the president giving my weekly report... at the time we had absolutely reliable evidence that strategic military planning in NATO HQ still included the "worst option" with the use of nuclear weapons against Russia or China, and that in NATO circles, the approach leading to the PfP proclaimed and widely advertised as a universal process in which all countries including Russia could find their place... [was in reality] a school for gradual accession of various candidates, but naturally not Russia. This approach was taking over' (Primakov, 1999: 227-228).

The Russian military leadership clearly also decided that, 'through the PfP, the West was once again trying to fool them. This view was held by many influential figures close to... Yeltsin including the Security Council head Oleg Lobov... PfP simply does not interest Russian generals. They have no need for expensive, joint peacekeeping operations, considering that the [Ministry of Defence] does not even have enough money to pay its soldiers or to buy them food' (*Moscow Times*, December 8, 1994). NATO's gigantic military capacities were once again starkly contrasted to those of Russia.

The proposed signing of the PfP led to enraged voices being raised in the Duma. Gennadii Ziuganov, for example, leader of the Russian Communist Party, called the signing of the PfP by Russia 'blasphemous', as it fell on the anniversary of the invasion of Russia by Nazi Germany (22 June 1941): 'Our foreign minister Kozyrev, on behalf of Yeltsin, is signing a treaty on the entry of the Russian Federation into the Partnership for Peace programme. Its name is misleading. The real aim of this programme is not to guarantee peace, but the gradual introduction into NATO of former socialist states which used to be part of the Warsaw Pact. The new organisation, in this way, is set to become an instrument of geopolitical expansion to confirm a new world order. It was [president]... Bush who first introduced the concept of a new world order and he borrowed the term from Nazi Germany... The new twist to US expansionism is aimed above all against Russia's rebirth as a great power' (*Gosudartsvennaia Duma: Stenogramma Zasedanii:* 6, paragraph 1).

It was not NATO per se, but enlargement, that was seen in such a negative light. Russia's geopolitical situation was gravest in the West, where even Ukraine was apparently considering NATO membership. 'The Russian military... are

concerned with the alliance's real military capabilities. At present neither Russia nor NATO could launch a surprise attack in Europe. However, expansion would give NATO that capability. The Russian military must treat it as a direct threat of invasion, rapidly approaching casus belli proportions' (*Moscow Times*, December 8, 1994).

Realists in Russia argued that the more hard-line, independent course was forced on them by the failure of Atlanticism to reap rewards. Russian diplomacy had failed. NATO was expanding, the 'near abroad' was escaping, oil and gas reserves in central Asia would be bought up by the West and so on. The West was accused of wanting to turn Russia into a compliant source of raw materials. Former Warsaw Pact members formed close diplomatic ties with NATO and eventually some of them joined, others forming a queue close behind, and sometimes carrying out military manoeuvres with US forces (e.g. Centrazbat in Central Asia in 1997 – although Russian forces were also involved).

By June 1994, after a long and difficult period of diplomacy, Russia signed the PfP Framework Document (of which details are given below), and also in June NATO and Russia agreed on a *Summary of Conclusions,* defining the main elements of an enhanced dialogue between them beyond the NACC and PfP.

The Primakov period

On becoming foreign minister in January 1996, Primakov outlined his priorities – the CIS, eastern Europe, Asia-Pacific, Europe and USA – 'to demonstrate to the West Russia's capability as a counterweight to NATO and EU enlargement' (Sergounin, 1996: 11). In his first speech on accepting the position, on January 12 1996, he stated that 'Russia was and remains a great power. Her foreign policy should correspond to that status.' He expressed a desire for reasonably friendly relations with the USA, though 'we proceed from the need for an equitable... mutually beneficial partnership.' Any further expansion of NATO would disrupt this equilibrium: 'I have a negative attitude to the possible expansion of NATO. I think it is counterproductive for the stabilisation of the situation in Europe and would undoubtedly create a new geopolitical situation for Russia.'[106] In January 1996, meanwhile, Russian troops began deployment as part of the Implementation

[106] Quotations from this speech taken from Leighton (1999: 3).

Force (IFOR) in Bosnia. There were several 16+1 Council meetings in early and mid-1996, as well as NAC foreign minister-level meetings. Such gatherings took place in most months of 1996.

On Christmas Day 1996, Minister of Defence Rodionov stated plainly that 'the activity of the North Atlantic alliance, which has made a radical decision to expand eastward, is a potential source of danger which could grow into a military threat'.[107] Among the Russian elite at the time, 'the only issue we have more or less unity on, is our disapproval of NATO' (Rogov, in Kozyrev et al., 1996: 27).

By January 1997, however, the two sides had prepared the ground for talks between Javier Solana and Primakov on a NATO-Russia document. These talks went through six rounds, before the Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security could be agreed on, approved by the NAC in May 1997, and the Founding Act could be signed.[108] This led to the formation of the Permanent Joint Council (PJC). The North Atlantic Council Meeting in July 1997 issued the 'Madrid Declaration on Euro-Atlantic Security and Cooperation'. This reaffirmed the statement that NATO would 'expect and welcome the accession of new members' made at the Brussels Summit. It confirmed that (as the 'Study on NATO Enlargement' of 1995 had stated) 'NATO's military effectiveness should be sustained as the alliance enlarges'. The declaration also saw the official invitation to the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland to begin accession talks, with a view to membership of the countries becoming effective by the time of the 50th anniversary of the Washington Treaty in 1999. The alliance confirmed its openness to further new members. On 12 March 1999, the accession of the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland took place.

Out-of-area operations and an increased sense of threat

NATO's actions in Bosnia caused an increase in Russian alarm. They demonstrated that NATO was willing to act outside its area of responsibility – defence of its members – without United Nations sanction and without apparent regard for Russia's interests. To many in Russia, this represented an extreme threat, the realisation of many of their fears regarding the future: that NATO was now so

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[107] Cited in Felgenhauer (1997: 14).
[108] NATO (2000), *Online Library*. Online at: http://www.nato.int/docu.

powerful as to be able to carry out military strikes against states it did not approve of suggested the possibility of its doing so in the former Soviet Union and thus completely eclipsing Russian control of the CIS. Some in parliament also suggested that this could mean that NATO was developing plans to attack Russia itself.[109]

Russia's major foreign policy and security documents demonstrate that NATO was increasingly seen as a threat to Russian national security in official circles. The change between the 1993, 1997 and 2000 documents is clear. The 1997 National Security document finds a threat in the 'attempts to create an international relations structure based on domination by developed Western countries in the international community, under US leadership and designed for unilateral solutions (including the use of military force) to key issues in world politics in circumvention of the fundamental rules of international law'. Both the 1997 blueprint and the 2000 National Security Doctrine 'state that "military factors in world politics" (1997 version) and "military force and violence" (2000 version) are still important factors in international politics' (Godzmirski, 2000: 5), but the 1997 version expresses the hope that these might be ameliorated in international affairs. The 1997 document is critical of the 'threat to stablilization' posed by 'attempts to introduce into international parlance such concepts as "humanitarian intervention" and "limited sovereignty" in order to justify unilateral power actions bypassing the UN Security Council are not acceptable'.

In 1998, however, the Permanent Joint Council (PJC) agreed to continue Russia's cooperation with The Stabilisation Force (SFOR), and condemned Belgrade's use of force in Kosovo as well as attacks by Kosovar fighters. Similar statements on the need for diplomatic solutions continued through late 1998. 'This approach permitted Russian isolation anxiety resulting from the first NATO enlargement round to be cushioned politically' (Spillmann and Wenger, 1999: paragraph 13).

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[109] In 1995 the Russian Institute for Defence Studies (reportedly commissioned by the Ministry of Defence) produced a report which concluded that 'The US and its allies represent the main threat to Russian national security', and suggested a return to nuclear stand-off and reoccupation of the Baltic States, as well as economic protectionism, a military-nuclear alliance with Iraq, Iran and Libya and the creation of a new state including Belarus, Kazakhstan and Ukraine (NUPI *Chronology of Events*, 20 October 1995).

The Kosovo conflict was a major reason why the official documents were altered further between 1997 and 2000, a reflection of increasing alarm. This period saw perhaps the low point in Russia-NATO relations. In April 1999, a revised NATO Strategic Concept was also approved after 15 months of debate. It emphasized 'new patterns of cooperation with the Euro-Atlantic security structure that would allow a role in security matters external to NATO which could potentially spill over into the alliance (as in the Balkans). Invitations for membership of NATO were extended to the Baltic States' (Virtual Information Centre, 1999).[110] Russia, 'concerned with this disturbing change in NATO strategy, was simultaneously debating changes to its military doctrine to clearly delineate its perceived security interests and concerns within the changing environment. NATO's expansion into Poland, combined with the Kosovo bombing campaign, provided Russian military hard-liners with broader political support for a doctrine of confrontation' (Virtual Information Center, 1999). The Russian National Security Concept of 2000 demonstrated the anxiety of Russia's elite that, 'elevated to the rank of strategic doctrine, NATO's transition to the practice of using military force outside its zone of responsibility and without UN Security Council sanction could destabilize the entire global strategic situation. The growing technical advantage of a number of leading powers and their enhanced ability to create new weapons and military equipment could provoke a new phase of the arms race and radically alter the forms and methods of warfare. The 2000 document is generally 'much more pessimistic' (Godzmirski, 2000: 9). It reflected Russian reactions to NATO enlargement, the bombing of Kosovo, the 1998 economic collapse and conflict in Chechnya.

The end of the decade – a new security doctrine

The 2000 National Security Doctrine summed up the elite perception of threats facing Russia at the end of the 1990s. The main threats in the international sphere came from the 'striving of individual states and inter-state associations to lower the role of the existing mechanisms of ensuring international security, above all the UN and the OSCE; the danger of weakening the political, economic and military

[110] An updated NATO Strategic Concept was approved at the NATO Summit Meeting held in Washington, DC, 23-24 April 1999.

influence of Russia in the world; the strengthening of military-political blocs and unions, above all the eastward enlargement of NATO; the possible appearance of foreign military bases and large military contingents in direct proximity to the Russian borders; the proliferation of mass destruction weapons and their delivery vehicles'.

Threats to the national security of the Russian Federation in the international sphere were found in 'the attempts of other states to hinder the strengthening of Russia as a centre of influence in the multipolar world, prevent the implementation of its national interests and weaken its positions in Europe, the Middle East, the Transcaucasus, Central Asia and Asia Pacific'. The Concept also argued that, 'The transition of NATO to the use of force (military force) beyond the zone of its responsibility and without the sanction of the UN Security Council, which has been elevated to the level of a strategic doctrine, is fraught with the destabilisation of the strategic situation in the world'.

Under the heading 'Military-Political Principles', (sub-heading 'Military-political situation'), the 2000 Military Doctrine argues that 'a destabilizing impact on the military-political situation is exerted by: attempts to weaken (ignore) the existing mechanism for safeguarding international security (primarily the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe); the utilization of military-force actions as a means of "humanitarian intervention" without the sanction of the UN Security Council, in circumvention of the generally accepted principles and norms of international law; the violation by certain states of international treaties and agreements in the sphere of arms limitation and disarmament'. At the same time, 'external and internal threats to the military security of the Russian Federation and its allies persist and in certain areas are increasing. The main external threats are: territorial claims against the Russian Federation; interference in the Russian Federation's internal affairs; attempts to ignore the Russian Federation's interests in resolving international security problems, and to oppose its strengthening as one influential center in a multipolar world; the existence of seats of armed conflict, primarily close to the Russian Federation's state border and the borders of its allies; the creation buildup of groups of forces leading to the violation of the existing balance of forces, close to the Russian Federation's state border and the borders of its allies or on the seas

adjoining their territories; the expansion of military blocs and alliances to the detriment of the Russian Federation's military security'. In the section on 'strengthening international security', the doctrine states that Russia would seek the 'preservation and observance of the [ABM treaty] – the cornerstone of strategic stability. The implementation of the plans by the United States to create a [NMD system] will inevitably compel the Russian Federation to adopt adequate measures for maintaining it national security at the proper level'.[111]

Colonel-general Valerii Manilov[112] backed up the document with the statement that 'Today, there are no military threats, which by their scope or importance can be a menace to the NATO members... To survive as a military alliance the bloc has to invent new tasks.... So we have what we have:... an air operation in the Balkans in which NATO realized its new strategic conception by employing, without a UN sanction, its joint military force outside the sphere of competence against a sovereign state' (Manilov, 2000: 3).

There was strong evidence, then, that some among the Russian elite took the military threat from NATO seriously and that this alarm had increased during the decade. 'The precision with which various Russian military services imagine scenarios involving the large-scale use of NATO forces in the former Soviet Union, and the still greater precision with which they describe the capabilities of the Russian Air Force or Army must have in order to prevail, seems to blur the line between planning yardsticks and genuine threat analysis' (Legvold, 1997: 47-48). In May 1998, the head of the Defence Ministry's Main Directorate of International Military Cooperation, Colonel-General Leonid Ivashov, argued that 'Russia will have to increase its strategic forces in the northwest of the country, if former Soviet republics become candidates for NATO membership'. He went on to deny '"the political speculation by NATO" that Moscow, which is cooperating with the organization, has reconciled itself with the alliance's enlargement. It was, he claimed "not true. At all official levels, we openly say that, if former Soviet Republics become candidates for admission into the alliance, then the situation in Europe will become unstable and the geopolitical situation will change"... We have asked in a bewildered way: against whom are the present 19 NATO member

[111] This translation of the doctrine comes from the Virtual Information Center (1999).
[112] First Deputy Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Russia.

states, which have about 50 divisions in total, now going to defend themselves? What more powerful enemy in Europe do they have in mind? We have not received a clear answer, although it is clear that Russia is implied' (RFE/RL, 28 May 1998).

* * *

In short, by the middle of the decade Russia had a 'unique consensus on the problem of NATO's eastward expansion. Representatives of the entire political spectrum with rare exceptions are against the bloc's expansion' (Rogov, 1999: 3). The two major foreign policy documents that came at the end of the decade reflected the changing external circumstances. They showed the official view of NATO's changing role and argued that it represented a threat to Russia's national security. Yet, while some members of the General Staff and opposition parties seemed to believe that NATO represented a genuine military threat, to most in the elite (the consensus view), the problem was, rather, that NATO's enlargement and its outreach via the PfP programme, combined with its out-of-area operations, had sidelined Russia from the centre of global and European politics and threatened further weakening of its geostrategic situation. Russia would be a minor state among other such states in the region, some of which were hostile and had designs on Russia's national interests in the CIS. Russia's 'encirclement' and rejection by NATO would only exacerbate the negative geostrategic factors found at the beginning of the decade, and which had indeed worsened by the end of the decade. What could Russia do about it?

Russia and NATO – change and stability

The so-called honeymoon period was a period of bandwagoning. With the perception that NATO represented a growing threat and the establishment of the consensus on a realist, 'independent' foreign policy course, Russia and NATO settled into a relationship of hard bargaining, some notable formal agreements, an ability to work together at times, but distinguished by suspicion and even the occasional threat of war. Russia's response to NATO expansion from late 1993

onwards was bargaining to make the best of a bad situation, but policy was often incoherent (Kogan-Yasin, 1999: 22) and unsuccessful.

The development of formal links, notably the PfP and the PJC, shows that, despite the very serious disagreements arising from NATO enlargement, contact was retained and formal institutions were created and replaced, even as the very actions the Russians continually described as unacceptable continued. Institutions such as the PfP and the PJC were clearly devised to (among other things) decrease Russia's perception that NATO represented a threat. Yet they also set in stone the continuing existence and probable future enlargement of NATO and hence were received in Moscow with mixed feelings, among which was the realisation that there was nothing Moscow could do to stop NATO. The hope in Moscow was expressed that they would at least enable Russia to influence the enlargement process. In January 1997, the German Foreign Minister, Klaus Kinkel argued that Russia's objections to NATO expansion were bargaining ploys: 'Russia knows it cannot stop NATO expansion and wants to obtain a good price for it'.

The Partnership for Peace: the consensus strategy is established

The PfP, signed by Russia in June 1994, established NATO's decision to look towards an active future and increasing depth of relations with states beyond the borders of its members. As the Russians perceived, it was also a way to begin the process of enlargement. The PfP enabled NATO to test new entrants for suitability, retaining treaty-ratified influence over them. Even in states which were not on the initial list for membership or even seriously considered for membership, the PfP fulfilled a similar purpose.[113] As it turned out, PfP functioned rather well from NATO's perspective, as expansion did indeed take place, helped by the close ties established in this period with states in eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

PfP was also a way to obtain Russian compliance on the issue of enlargement, while avoiding having to make any serious concessions. It was a

[113] For example, the Central Asian states took part in the Centrazbat military manoeuvres in September 1997 (with US and Russian forces among others) and Islam Karimov, the president of Uzbekistan, later allowed airbases to be used for US attacks on Iraq in 2003. Later, more or less permanent bases were established as part of the United States' conflict against the Taleban, and remain.

victory for NATO diplomacy and a defeat for Russia. Russia's reaction to the programme demonstrated an ambivalence that seemed to reflect the fact that it saw the PfP as both an opportunity and a threat. Russia reluctantly signed up to the Partnership in June 1994, but won some concessions to special treatment on the way, and thereby managed to proclaim a diplomatic victory. In the build up to the signing of the PfP Yeltsin and Kozyrev played all their diplomatic cards, though, of course, (and as Yeltsin admitted), they were 'playing with a weak hand'. At the NATO Council meeting in Brussels in December 1994, Kozyrev stated that Russia was postponing participation in the PfP. Yeltsin made his extremely harsh speech at the CSCE summit in Budapest on 7 December 1994, warning that pushing NATO up to Russia's borders risked plunging Europe into a 'cold peace'. Kozyrev once again mentioned the idea of subordinating NATO to the CSCE. Early in 1994, he proposed that the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) be transformed into an independent structure of military-political cooperation, closely linked to the CSCE... the CSCE [would be] assigned the role of coordinator of the efforts of NATO, the European Union, the Council of Europe, the Western European Union and the CIS in the areas of strengthening stability and security, peacekeeping, and protecting the rights of national minorities in Europe' (Donaldson & Nogee, 2000: 245).

Kozyrev signed the PfP framework document with a protocol affirming that 'Russia and NATO have agreed to prepare a wide-ranging individual program of partnership, in keeping with Russia's size, importance, and potential'. A 'highly placed' Ministry of Defence official said that, 'in the struggle against the foreign ministry's opportunistic policies, our line has emerged victorious. The president has confirmed a set of measures proposed by the Ministry of Defence which are designed to forestall the expansion of NATO' (*Moscow Times*, 1 June, 1995). Kozyrev claimed that 'the alliance had yielded to Russian pressure in deciding to postpone talks on [expansion] until 1997... [He] hailed the move as "a victory scored by Russian diplomats" and that "Russia's resistance has forced NATO to put off its expansion to the east... if Russia continues to fight desperately against the approach of NATO to its borders, then the West, possibly, will have to make

further concessions"' (*Moscow Times,* 7 October 1995). Similar attitudes were shared widely among the elite.

This kind of opinion was part of the reason the Russian state adopted forceful language in its dealings with the West. The manner in which this dialogue occurred set the tone for the rest of the 1990s: grudging acceptance of the inevitable, fitting the overall bandwagoning strategy. The alternative, balancing, was simply impossible, owing to the imbalance in material power.

In May 1995 Russia signed the Individual Partnership Programme (IPP) of the PfP and *Areas on Pursuance of Broad, Enhanced NATO-Russia Dialogue and Cooperation*. In July there was a 16+1 Council meeting on relations between Russia and NATO, followed later in the year by more meetings in this format to discuss the former Yugoslavia and the CFE treaty.[114] Thus in the mid-1990s, through the PfP framework, Russia and NATO signed several important documents. Meanwhile, however, other major treaties, such as START-2 were languishing unratified in the Duma, even though the Duma did begin the ratification process in the summer of 1995 with the proviso that modifications to the treaty were likely. The NATO air strikes against the Bosnian Serbs in August 1995 put a stop to any progress. Once again, the Russians reacted sharply and Russian media and Parliamentarians voiced outrage at the events occurring in the former Yugoslavia. The Duma elected in 1995, moreover, was less likely than its predecessor to support such issues. Even with the potential support of Zhirinovskii's Liberal Democratic Party, securing the required 226 votes for ratification of START-2 appeared to be unlikely (Pikayev, 2004). Yet, with

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[114] Given Russia's desire to be able to influence conflicts in and tighten its grip over the CIS, an alteration to the 1990 CFE treaty was in Russia's interests. There was also an attempt to use the negotiations over START, the ABM treaty and NATO enlargement to secure concessions in an area vital to Russia's national security. In fact, Russia simply ignored the southern flank-limitation quotas. NATO seemed amenable to proposed changes to the CFE Treaty in 1995. NATO ministers apparently told Russian envoy Vitalii Churkin that modifications to the treaty were possible. Churkin and diplomats in Moscow 'called those overtures encouraging' (*Moscow Times*, 22 September 1995). At the CFE Treaty Conference in October 1995 in Vienna, Russian diplomats produced a plan to alter the flank limits in order to allow Russia to station more heavy weapons there. In January 1999, the Russian Foreign Ministry called again for an updated CFE Treaty. 'The Russian side proceeds from the fact that decisive progress at the talks should be reached before new members are officially admitted to NATO... The entire system of balance upon which the CFE Treaty is founded will be upset' by expansion (*Summary of World Broadcasts*, 4 January 1999).

encouragement from Primakov in 1996 this Duma did begin the process of ratification.[115]

The end of PfP negotiations and Russian disappointment

Soon after the PfP was signed, NATO announced firm plans for expansion, dashing Moscow's hopes of having shelved the issue for several years. The supposed diplomatic victory looked hollow. The gap between Russia's and NATO's power had enabled NATO to steamroller PfP through Russian protests. The threat felt by Russia's leadership, however, did not lead to a new strategy: bandwagoning policy continued, though modified as Russia demanded compensation – the best deal possible in return for its acquiescence – as part of the new, more independent foreign policy (and using a smokescreen of fierce rhetoric). Thus, 'as it became increasingly evident in 1995 that NATO expansion was inexorable, Moscow focused on the preconditions that it would demand for acquiescing to the inevitable'. Among these 'were a favourable revision to the CFE Treaty, the nondeployment of military bases and nuclear weapons in the newly admitted countries, exclusion of the former Soviet republics (especially the Baltic states) as candidates for NATO membership, and recognition of Russia's security system with the CIS states' (Donaldson & Nogee, 2000: 244–245).

These demands were to be repeated regularly in the following years, and became the basis for Moscow's diplomatic bargaining. The history of the PfP and its role in the enlargement of NATO shows that, despite all its efforts, the fundamental military weakness of Russia enabled NATO to ignore Russia's interests. The balance of power in Europe worsened further for Russia.

The rhetoric from Russia became heated. NATO expansion was described as 'the most serious military threat to [Russia] since 1945... NATO members "have not renounced the use of force as a method to solve foreign policy problems"... This is also a reason why the Kozyrev line of January-February

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[115] The US Senate had ratified START-2 in January 1996. Once the desire on the part of the United States to alter the ABM Treaty became apparent, START-2 was even less likely to be appealing to the Russian side. But again, the prime cause of suspicion was NATO's eastward enlargement plans. After the signing of the Founding Act, and protocols signed by Primakov with Madeleine Albright, the potential for compromise was increased, yet this was not enough, and after the crisis of 1998 there was even less chance of ratification taking place. START-2 was, however, eventually ratified in April 2000.

[1995], offering to accept expansion in return for Western concessions elsewhere, was abandoned and Kozyrev himself severely reprimanded by Yeltsin. Apart from the uncompromising hostility of the bulk of the Russian establishment to expansion, Russians also feel that the West can simply not be trusted to deliver any concessions it has promised' (Lieven, 1995: 199).

Yet the factors preventing Russia from making a complete break from the West remained: fear of instability on and beyond its borders and its own military weakness and economic dependence on the West. The policy of bandwagoning continued after this interruption of frustrated rhetoric. Fortunately for Yeltsin, the US government was keen to offer him support against his domestic foes, and thus 'the revision of the 1990 CFE treaty which Albright proposed could qualify as the sort of "binding treaty" that Russia has been insisting on, enabling Moscow to acquiesce in NATO expansion while saving face' (RFE/RL, 21 February 1997).

The end of Kozyrev – and continuation of his policies

Kozyrev's time was soon to be up. He was replaced by Primakov at the beginning of 1996. In an interview with *Izvestiia* soon after his appointment, in March, Primakov said that Moscow would '"more vigorously and effectively" defend Russia's interests, rejecting a "strategic alliance [with] former cold war adversaries," warning that any enlargement of NATO would only encourage "a revival of the Russian military and a more assertive Russian policy in Europe." In saying that Russia's goal would also be closer integration of the newly independent states, he describes them as "parts of the former Soviet Union" rather than the CIS (cited in Goble, 1996).

As discussed in Chapter 4, there was a slight rise in Russian military spending in the mid-1990s, from the paltry 901 million (redenominated) roubles in 1992, to 8 billion in 1993, 40.6 billion in 1994, to 59.4 billion in 1995. This suggested that efforts had already been made to turn the situation around; and that some attempts at domestic strengthening were taking place. However, the utter failure to carry out meaningful military reform was demonstrated in Chechnya.

The policy established by the mid-1990s was forced on Russia by its weakness in the face of NATO's military power. As Yeltsin put it, 'the change of Foreign Minister does not mean a change in the basic principles of Russia's foreign

policy. They are defined not by ministers' personalities but by the country's interests' (Leighton, 1999: 3). The need remained to push for advantage wherever possible, and for Russia to maintain its position regionally and relative to other second-tier states. One place where this was perhaps possible, but also where local expansion had to operate within the general bandwagoning strategy, was in the former Soviet Union.

Primakov repeatedly asserted that, while NATO expansion was going to take place, there was no reason not to obtain as much as possible in return. Therefore, despite all that was said, Primakov had continued the core principles of Kozyrev's policy. In September 1996 the Minister of Defence, Rodionov, stated that, while he and the Russian people remained opposed to NATO enlargement, 'Moscow would continue to cooperate with NATO, even if it expanded' (NUPI *Chronology of Events*, 27 September 1996).

In keeping with this strategy, and 'commenting on the NATO Council meeting in Berlin in June 1996, Primakov emphasized: "Russia, while retaining a negative attitude towards this process... has singled out the core which is absolutely unacceptable – the movement of NATO infrastructure towards our borders. On this basis, Russia offers a dialogue to NATO". The Russian Ambassador in Brussels, Vitalii Churkin, was even more explicit: 'recently, at a quite high level, we have let NATO people know that we are worried not so much by the simple fact of "extension" but only by the approach of the alliance's infrastructure towards Russian borders... This attitude opens up some space for a search for constructive solutions in the interest of pan-European security' (Zagorski, 1997: 536). Russian Minister of Defence Sergeev visited Germany on 28-29 January 1998. He met Germany's Foreign Minister and complained that NATO expansion 'doesn't threaten anybody except Russia'. In February 1998 Russia criticised a plan to create a north-east NATO corps to be NATO's first-ever permanent military mission in central and eastern Europe. Sergeev argued that the move amounted to NATO's 'advancing toward the Russian border with weapons in its hands' (RFE/RL, 6 February 1998).

In May 1998 Yeltsin had visited the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to tell them that 'the long discussion around the priorities of our foreign policy is over at last'. The priorities were: 'preservation of Russia's territorial integrity, protection of its

national security, democratisation of society, and reforms and integration of its economy into the global market economy'. His remarks on NATO were cautiously positive, although he recommended 'radical changes' to NATO in order to 'strengthen security in Europe rather than threaten it' (NUPI *Chronology of Events*, 12 May 1998).

Regional power projection: the CIS

Most of the major institutions in Moscow paid little or no attention to the former Soviet Union in the first few months of the new administration.[116] Quickly, however, the CIS came to occupy a prominent position in Russian foreign policy. This was the one area where Russia could project its power, where the retreat could be halted and reversed and, as it quickly turned out, where NATO would not make an aggressive challenge.[117] Moreover, it was frequently cited by the Russian elite as being a rational response to NATO expansion, which threatened to include the former Soviet Union.

Soon, therefore, the region took on prominence in Moscow's foreign policy, and in September 1992 Yeltsin issued a decree to establish embassies in former Soviet republics.[118] Exactly a year later, after Yeltsin had told the UN that the 'near abroad' was a 'sphere of vital Russian interests', Kozyrev coined the term 'Yeltsin Doctrine' to describe Russia's policy towards the former Soviet space. This was also sometimes called the 'Monroevskii Doctrine' as it stressed Russia's right to dominate the region.[119] As early as February 1993 Kozyrev had stated that, 'It should not be forgotten that the Commonwealth of Independent States brings together peoples who have been linked to Russia for centuries. It is also obvious

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[116] The reformist government claimed that the newly independent states were free to do what they wanted. Moreover, with policy focused on Washington, the leadership in Moscow demonstrated a lack of interest in the former Soviet states.

[117] The CIS was a means of strengthening Russia's influence as a global player. The West was not entirely averse to this doctrine: it was also in Western interests as it seemed likely to lead to greater stability in the region. Recent comments by Ivanov on strengthening the CIS Security and Cooperation Treaty, have been seen as a means of putting pressure on NATO before the agreement of May 2002 (Ivanov, Press conference remarks, at the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *Daily Bulletin*, 14 May 2002); see also *The Guardian,* 15 May 2002.

[118] The post of deputy prime minister for the CIS was created in November 1994.

[119] 'This model still appeals to most Russian supporters of a strong state, or *derzhava*. Influential Russian officials regard Russia's keeping its great power status to be in its primary national security interest, which needs to be defended at all cost. The view that Russia should use the CIS as a string of buffer countries under the influence of Moscow is the preferred scenario for the bulk of the Russian political elite' (Trenin, 2001: 66).

that the entire geographic area of the former USSR is a sphere of vital interest to us' (Kozyrev, 1993: paragraph 5). On 8 April 1994, *Nezavisimaia Gazeta* published a map of Russia showing northern oblasts of Kazakhstan as part of Russia.

A number of treaties were signed among CIS states following the Tashkent summit of 1992. Numerous military agreements were signed in that year as well, but these 'rarely achieved consensus and failed to lay down workable measures relating to either a common defence budget or joint military planning... during 1992 the tendency towards national military formation accelerated. Crucially, this process involved Russia... The CIS framework was increasingly hollowed out by this process of national military devolution' (Sakwa & Webber, 1999: 383).[120] In January 1993 the CIS Charter was signed – but only by Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. It was also 'a very loose document, subject to further reservations and amendments to be introduced at the stage of ratification' (Kortunov, 2004: paragraph 40). In February 1994 the Russian government announced plans to keep Russian soldiers in the "near abroad" by constructing almost 30 military bases out of existing military units located on these territories. It became obvious to foreign observers that Russia, seeking to assume an international great-power role, intended to regain it primarily by carving out a leadership role for itself within the former Soviet Union' (Jonson, 1997: 319).

Thus Russia sought to strengthen CIS-wide structures and bind the CIS countries to commitments in a very stop-start manner. The explicit role of NATO in causing bursts of energy in this direction was often acknowledged by the Russian leadership. Echoing the frequent concerns of the military establishment in Moscow, Kozyrev argued in January 1994 that 'if Russia leaves the "near abroad", the security vacuum there "will inevitably be filled by other powers not always friendly, and in many cases hostile to Russian interests"' (cited by Kortunov: 2004: paragraph 70). Yeltsin also linked NATO enlargement to a strengthening of the CIS at a September 1995 press conference, warning the Western powers of the

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[120] This was despite the fact that, as one prominent military analyst argued, it was 'completely obvious that if one proceeds from long term interests, then a defense alliance [among the CIS states] is most expedient for each of the sovereign republics individually and the CIS as a whole... In the event that no new military alliance comes about, it will be necessary to create anew a defense within the confines of our own borders... the entire air defense system will be disrupted' (Gareev, 1992: 542).

possibility of a new military alliance within the CIS. He talked of a return to Warsaw Pact days. 'But few of the former Soviet republics seemed enthusiastic about the idea. Only Belarus voiced outright support, while Ukraine responded by announcing its intention of widening cooperation with NATO' (*Moscow Times,* 23 September 1995). Decree number 940 signed by Yeltsin on 14 September called for 'the creation of an integrated political and economic community of states... in order to create an effective "collective defence" organization'.

On 28 March 1996, CIS defense ministers met to discuss increasing cooperation. Grachev 'expressed the need to coordinate defense policies, especially in light of NATO expansion'. In November 1995 he also linked the establishment of a unified CIS air-defence system to NATO expansion, and argued that expansion would require Russia to look for allies in the Far East and Middle East. At a 9 February 1996 press conference following a visit to Belgrade, he said that Russia 'would take "appropriate measures" to counter NATO enlargement... if NATO expands, Russia would "start to look for new partners in CEE and the CIS to set up a new politico-military alliance' (RFE/RL, 12 February 1996). Russia dominated the CIS institutions, with Yeltsin heading the Collective Security Council (the highest political body of the CIS) and Primakov the Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs (the highest consultative body on the matters of co-ordination of foreign policy). During the Presidential elections of 1996, Yeltsin consistently confirmed Russia's interest in the CIS. In December 1996, however (on the fifth anniversary of the formation of the CIS), he said that CIS military cooperation was not intended as a counterweight to NATO expansion.

In late 1998, following the Kosovo conflict (see below for details), the Duma debated taking measures to 'increase the Russian Federation's defence capability... to strengthen collective security and expand military and technical cooperation first of all with the CIS countries' (RFE/RL, 19 December, 1998). Yet Russia's hopes of raising military expenditure were dashed by the economic collapse.

The CIS struggled on, performing some basic tasks as a discussion forum; a long way from a counterbalance to NATO. The sobering experience in Chechnya seemed to suggest that the Russian military was not even able to take care of its own country, and thus Moscow's more 'pragmatic' approach, scaling down

ambitious plans in the CIS were forced on it by reality. It was not only incompetence and low morale but a 'shortfall in Russian military spending, which helps explain the non-implementation or failure of those bilateral and multilateral military and security treaties signed by CIS states which Russia has offered to underwrite' (Allison, 1998: 4). With Uzbekistan pulling out of the Collective Security Treaty (signed in Tashkent on 15 May, 1992) and the withdrawal of Russian forces from Azerbaijan (apart from those manning a former Soviet radar station) to give two examples, the Russian presence at the borders of the CIS was waning by the end of the decade. After several years when Russia's military presence seemed likely to increase, the trend has been reversed.

Strengthening ties with Belarus and Ukraine, and preventing their joining NATO, was a vital facet of Russian diplomacy. With the on-off building of the Union Treaty with Belarus (which was signed in December 1999), some success was achieved in this area. However, Ukraine moved in the opposite direction, becoming a serious contender for a place in NATO. Immediately after the formation of the CIS, President Kravchuk of Ukraine strongly opposed the idea of CIS joint forces. Like Russia, Ukraine achieved high profile relations with NATO to the extent of being honoured with a 'Charter on a distinctive partnership' in July 1997. This, it was said, 'does neither foreclose nor envisage future Ukrainian NATO membership, but it explicitly states "the inherent right of all states" to "be free to choose or change... security arrangements, including treaties of alliance, as they arise' (BITS *Press Release*, 1997). Thus there was some success with Belarus, but outright failure with the Ukraine.

Hard bargaining: making the most of strategic failure

Military bargaining: the nuclear chip

Nuclear weapons were the only parts of Russia's military force that remained world class – superpower-sized, if in need of some maintenance. They were an increasingly visible aspect of Russia's response to NATO and of Russia's post-Soviet military doctrines and national security doctrines.[121] Given Russia's

[121] Russia's 2000 National Security Doctrine and Military Doctrine seemed to widen the possibilities for the use of nuclear weapons, to include cases in which the county was attacked with

economic and conventional military weakness, nuclear power was an obvious means of obtaining advantages. Nuclear, chemical and biological weapons did provide Russia with the possibility of ultimate deterrence.[122] Arbatov argued that 'nuclear equality would require that Washington "continue to treat Russia with respect"',[123] and while wrangling over the PfP and NATO's enlargement was taking place, 'an admiral, five vice-admirals and other Russian Black Sea Fleet officers wrote an open letter to... Yeltsin, suggesting that Russia should aim its intercontinental missiles at the capitals and key installations of NATO members if the alliance admits new members' (*Moscow Times*, January 21 1997). The Defence Council was apparently considering a new military doctrine in which first use of nuclear weapons in the face of conventional attack would be included, a move linked to NATO expansion.

The events in Kosovo in late 1998 and 1999 led Yeltsin to warn NATO not to 'push [Russia] towards military action. Otherwise there will be a minimum of a European or maybe even a world war, which must not be permitted' (RFE/RL, 12 April 1999). Again, this threat only made sense because of Russia's possession of large-scale nuclear weaponry. Colonel-General Iakovlev, commander of Russia's strategic rocket forces, stressed that Russia's economic situation was 'not favorable' for the development of general-purpose forces which he described as 'extremely necessary' following the expansion of NATO and in view of the 'absence on the CIS border of a firm system of collective security... our hopes remain pinned on nuclear deterrence forces and their main component – the strategic rocket forces'. The intercontinental ballistic RS-12M Topol missile (or SS-25) was test launched in September 1998 and Iakovlev also hailed the successful launching of 'all 57 of the Topol missiles' (NUPI *Chronology of Events*, 16 September 1998).

Russia's inability to maintain its weapons or indulge in research was, however, an embarrassing fact. Moscow pushed for lower levels of weaponry. START-2 was to reduce Russia's arsenal to 3,000 warheads. 'In 1992-93... The

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conventional weapons, and the situation was "critical to the national security of the Russian Federation".

[122] Fedorov (2002: 12) notes that both American and Russian strategic armaments are still targeted at each other. Therefore nuclear deterrence remains a persistent feature of Russian-American relations.

[123] Cited in Lo (2002: 111).

Kremlin, in fact, agreed to give up strategic nuclear parity with the United States by accepting US demands to rapidly scrap the cornerstone of its strategic triad: ground-based MIRVed intercontinental ballistic missiles. In order to enter the Missile Technology Control regime... profitable sales of missile engines to India were significantly restricted' (Pikayev, 2000: 1).[124] START-2 offered what many in the Russian elite saw as a means of retaining or even improving the strategic balance of power, by reducing to an equal (more affordable) number the warheads held by the US and Russia. START-3 was discussed, in which the number of warheads would be reduced to 2,000.

With current technology there was no defence against Russia's nuclear weapons (even a massive and surprise first strike), hence their strategic importance, and hence also the importance of the ABM treaty.

ABM treaty bargaining

On 21 January 1996, the US stated its wish to amend the ABM treaty. Colonel-General Ivashov, head of the Ministry of Defence's Department for International Military Cooperation, immediately responded that it would harm the chances of ratifying START-2. Yet, as we have seen, START-2 was necessary because of the enormous cost of upkeep of the vast arsenal. Thus in February 1996, Gennadii Seleznev[125] warned that enlargement of NATO or withdrawal of the US from the ABM treaty would kill any chance of ratification of START 2. But he added that Russia 'simply does not have the means' to maintain its current nuclear arsenal (RFE/RL, 14 February 1996). In March 1999, Vladimir Lukin told Ekho Moskvy radio station that there was a real chance of ratifying START-2 because it was obvious that the country was not able to finance and maintain its forces at the higher level (RFE/RL, 16 March 1999). Again, economic weakness influenced Russia's ability to bargain.

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[124] The sale of nuclear technology by Russia to Iran, for example, (deal signed 8 January 1995) did go ahead. Sales to China also formed a useful coincidence of economic interest and further improved relations between Russia and China.

[125] Seleznev was elected as a Russian Communist Party member of the State Duma in 1993 and 1995. From 1995 he was Chairman of the State Duma, and from 1996 Chairman of the Interparliamentary Legislative Commission (lower chamber) of the Intergovernmental Executive Committee in the Russia-Belarus Community of Sovereign States.

The ABM issue rumbled on and was raised again in the 1998-1999 period. On 23 April 1998, acting Deputy Defence Minister Mikhailov also urged ratification of START-2... 'any other decisions will mean that the USA will feel free to withdraw from the antimissile treaty, whereas Russia, because of its current economic situation, will not be able to continue the arms race which may be initiated by the USA' (*Summary of World Broadcasts*, 27 April 1998). However, in mid-March 1999, the Russian Foreign Ministry called it a 'serious threat to the whole process of nuclear arms reduction as well as strategic stability'. Primakov noted that it came as an 'unpleasant surprise' (RFE/RL, 19 March 1999). A few months later, in June 1999, a joint communiqué issued by Russia and the US 'concerning strategic offensive and defensive arms and further strengthening of stability' stated that the parties reaffirmed their commitment to the ABM treaty, while there were possibilities of increasing the 'viability' of the treaty. START-3 was mentioned in connection with this, implying that ways were being found to work around the importance of the treaty for Russian national security.

Ultimately, Russia's nuclear weapons did not help the country achieve its aims regarding NATO. Every time nuclear weapons were brandished, enlargement pushed ahead. Fedorov (2002: 6), therefore, argued that 'while helping to deter large-scale aggression, nuclear weapons as such cannot be converted into political power... Russia failed to prevent NATO enlargement, its war against the Milosevich regime, and the collapse of the latter'.

Promoting a moral world order

Throughout the 1990s, Russia made use of the United Nations as a forum for airing its grievances and proposing alternative visions to that conjured up by NATO. Russia 'needed to participate in constructing a new UN- and multilaterally based democratic international system to make up for its lack of effective traditional foreign policy instruments, such as military power' (Lo, 2002: 90). In this vein, Primakov, addressing the UN General Assembly (23 September 1997) 'criticised NATO expansion, which "does not proceed from existing reality" and creates "new division lines". He repeated Russia's promise to guarantee the security of the Baltic States'. The 1997 National Security blueprint stated that 'The Russian Federation's national interests in the foreign-policy sphere require the implementation of an

active foreign policy aimed at consolidating Russia's position as a great power and as one of the emergent multi-polar world's influential centres.' All this was 'intended to serve up an image of Russia as a law-abiding member of the international community at a time when many countries viewed the US in just the opposite way' (Lo, 2002: 92).

Following bombings in Iraq in December 1999, the Duma adopted a statement by a massive majority (394 votes in favour, one against and two abstentions), supported by Ivanov, then Foreign Minister, that the Duma 'resolutely condemns "the barbaric bombing of the Republic of Iraq, carried out by the USA and Great Britain without the authorization of the UN Security Council"... Primakov rejected [Al Gore's]... arguments for airstrikes telling him that '"Russia unequivocally condemns the American and British military action and regards it as a crude violation of the relevant resolutions of the UN Security Council, the UN Charter and the universally recognized principles of international law'... According to Primakov, the Anglo-American action against Iraq "infringes the whole of the world legal order that has been established since the Second World War and undermines the efforts and authority of the UN Security Council" (*Summary of World Broadcasts*, 19 December 1998). On 6 March 1999, Ivanov accused the US of seeking "to impose a unipolar order on the world". Thus "the democratic, multipolar world order" sought by Russia required that "there be no diktat on the part of any one state".[126] In June 1999, Russia and China issued a joint communiqué condemning the 'barbarous' bombing of Yugoslavia. There were signs that Russia made attempts to firm an axis with itself, China and India to balance against NATO.

This was an ultimately futile strategy, which did not bear any fruit. It was also part of Russia's attempts to weaken the ties binding NATO countries. In this case, as Light et al. (2000a: 11) point out, it was entirely normal and logical for Russia to try to accelerate any process of disintegration that NATO might be going through following the disappearance of the Soviet threat. Yeltsin moved to develop a differentiated relationship with the countries of Europe as well as suggesting that the US and Europe had different interests and that Europe should not go along with the goal of enlargement; or that European countries should aim to join Russia

[126] Cited by Lo (2002: 92).

within the CSCE/OSCE (or even the WEU) to form an alliance to rival NATO. Annual summits were planned between the presidents of Russia, Germany, and France, independently of those between Russia and the US. There were differences of opinion within NATO which were suitable for exploitation. These revolved around the desire of some European countries, notably Germany and France, to increase the weight they held within the European security structures. They sought to strengthen the EU's military power (see Chapter 6), and weaken Washington's influence in European affairs.

The Founding Act and the PJC: hard bargaining and more failure

The history of the signing of the Founding Act shows clearly the workings of Russia's foreign policy in regard to NATO. Early in 1997 President Clinton announced that a new Founding Act with Russia would be signed at around the time of the Madrid Summit scheduled for July, in which issues of enlargement were to be decided. Russia and NATO had worked together on the ground in Bosnia after a shaky start, and this was said to have contributed to the successful negotiations over the Founding Act (NATO Madrid Summit Press Information, 1997). NATO's official line was that 'the transformation Russia is undergoing, its force reductions – which will continue – the withdrawal of Russian forces from Central and Eastern Europe, the revision of Russia's military doctrine, and its participation in... Bosnia-Herzegovina' have led to the possibility of Russia cooperating with a 'profoundly transformed' NATO. This too involved 'reductions in conventional and nuclear forces... a revision of its strategic concept... new missions such as peacekeeping and through its support for security cooperation throughout Europe' (NATO Madrid Summit Press Information, 1997). By March 1997, after a series of discussions, Moscow had accepted that the NATO-Russia Charter would not be a legally binding treaty, as had been Moscow's insistence, but merely an 'executive agreement'.

On May 27, Boris Yeltsin, Javier Solana and NATO heads of state signed the *Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security between NATO and the Russian Federation*. This created at the same time the NATO-Russian Council, which would meet periodically to consider security problems in Europe. Crucially, NATO remained free to act without the Council's approval. Yet NATO

stated that it had 'no intention, no plan, no reason to deploy nuclear weapons on the territories of new members' or 'by additional permanent stationing of substantial combat forces'.[127] In the latter case, several situations in which this might actually occur were listed. Possible alterations to the CFE Treaty were mentioned, taking into account 'the legitimate security interests of all OSCE participating states' though in the context of further reductions in equipment.

Thus, by the standards of Russia's statements in previous years, the Founding Act represented a failure. Primakov was quick to call it a 'big victory for Russia', 'but in a television interview on the night of the signing, Yeltsin acknowledged that Russia was "playing a weak hand"' (Donaldson & Nogee, 2000: 246). Indeed, there was an element of humiliation for the Russian leadership; but at the same time a pragmatic acceptance of their fate. The Founding Act was signed only two months before the Madrid summit at which NATO decided to admit three new members from central Europe and declared an 'open door' for other countries to join. The Founding Act, NATO explicitly stated, 'does not delay, limit or dilute NATO's opening for the accession of new members, and it will not relegate any new NATO member to second class status'.

In Russia, reactions were mixed. Rodionov cautiously noted that not all problems within the pact had been ironed out. The Duma's Security Committee secretary, Viktor Iliukhin,[128] denounced the agreement as 'another example of the betrayal of Russia's interests'. Duma Speaker Seleznev, however, welcomed it, saying that NATO was taking Russia's desires into account. The Foreign Affairs Committee chairman, Lukin, praised it for its ban on the stationing of nuclear weapons on the territory of new members – which the pact did *not* in fact contain. As mentioned above, the NATO communiqué only stated that there were no plans to do so.

Similarly, Rogov (1999: 5-7) argued that 'Russian diplomacy achieved some major successes in 1997. First of all, it became possible to avoid a new confrontation between Moscow and the West that Russia could not win. Russia's

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[127] NATO (2000), *Online Library*. Founding Act on Mutual Relations, Cooperation and Security Between NATO and the Russian Federation, Paris, 27 May 1997. Online at: www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/fndact-a.htm.

[128] A Communist member of the Duma, and from 1998 Chairman of the Movement for Army and Defense Industry Support.

diplomacy managed despite the odds to avoid a crushing defeat, which would have... strengthened Russian isolation in the international arena... Moscow and the West agreed upon measures to prevent a large increase in the military threat to Russia during NATO expansion, including the non-deployment of Western nuclear weapons and combat forces in Eastern Europe'. This was an interesting argument, a redefinition of Russia's goals after the event, and a misrepresentation of the Founding Act. As Rogov himself had argued two years earlier, 'a common European home is being built now, but without Russia. When Russia lost power and its military capabilities were reduced, it could be ignored. The European Union and NATO are becoming the backbones of the new post-Cold War European system, economically, politically, and militarily. And Russia, as a non-member of those two bodies, is out' (Rogov, 1997: 3). It was wrong to suggest that the PJC had changed the situation in any great way, except perhaps as a means of cooling the situation.

The PJC, established by the Founding Act, held its first meeting on 26 September when Primakov met his counterparts in New York. It became an arena for renewed clashes over NATO's enlargement. NATO and Russia had different, and sometimes opposing, goals for the body. The PJC became 'bogged down in power struggles over procedure, agenda items and other minutiae' (Tigner, 1998). Primakov complained in December 1997 of 'a tendency to turn the Russia-NATO Council into a debating club'. Russia did 'gain some access to NATO deliberations through creation of the PJC – though without any role in deciding NATO policy outside of the specific subjects to be agreed by the Council: consultation, cooperation and even potential common action in areas to be agreed' (Hunter, 2000: 126).

Kosovo: symbol of Russia-NATO relations

The actions by NATO in Kosovo brought about perhaps the low point in Russia-NATO relations – but only temporarily. Only three years later, in Rome in May 2002, Russia (under Putin) and NATO established the NATO-Russia Council. [129]

[129] 'The establishment of the NATO-Russia Council ... opened a new chapter in NATO-Russia relations... A previous accord providing for regular consultations, the 1997... Founding Act, foundered due to disagreements over NATO military action in the former Yugoslavia and other issues' (RFE/RL Special Report: The NATO Summit, 19 November 2002).

As the preparations for war heated up, Russia was vociferous in its opposition. Yeltsin said that Russia 'would take unexplained military measures to "defend itself and the overall security of Europe"' (RFE/RL, 15 March 1999). In an illuminating aside, however, *Izvestiia* reported on 10 March 1999 that Russia was already participating in NATO's operations in the Balkans, 'as a carrier of military loads. Although Moscow is categorically opposed to a military response to the crisis in Kosovo, the Russian side is participating for its own benefit in NATO's preparations for the operation in Kosovo'.

The attack began on 24 March. Primakov famously turned his plane (en route to the US) in mid-flight and returned to Moscow, an act that became symbolic. On 24 March 1999, Russia pulled out of the PfP and military cooperation programmes 'following a last-minute appeal by Yeltsin on TV to Chirac, Shroeder and Clinton' (RFE/RL, 25 March 1999) to prevent NATO's attack. The Kosovo conflict meant that one of Russia's trump cards – permanent membership of the UN Security Council – had proved to be worthless. The PJC had also not fulfilled its hoped-for role.

The actions in Kosovo caused an immediate flurry of activity that looked as though Russia was changing its policy towards one of balancing, in reaction to a suddenly increased threat. In April, Minister of Defence Sergeev announced that his ministry intended to revise plans for reducing the size of Russia's armed forces. 'The current number – 1.2 million soldiers – could not be lowered, he said. He linked this revision of policy to NATO's new strategic concept adding that "the steps which NATO has taken against Yugoslavia increase our anxiety". Duma legislators were reported... to have rediscovered their commitment to military spending and that the military is already spending more money, roughly $2 million extra since NATO bombing began... and the de-mothballing of one S-300 anti-aircraft missile system' (RFE/RL, 8 April 1999). Yeltsin himself said that 'the Russian president warns NATO not to "push [Russia] towards military action. Otherwise there will be a minimum of a European or maybe even a world war, which must not be permitted"' (RFE/RL, 12 April 1999).[130]

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[130] As part of the PfP programme, Russia maintained delegates at NATO HQ and at Supreme Allied Headquarters Europe (SACEUR) in Mons. As a protest at the bombing of Serbia during the Kosovo conflict, these delegates were briefly withdrawn.

Russian actions also included 'freezing' various treaties that had been signed or planned but not yet ratified (Arbatov, 2000). These included START-3, the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty, the Open Skies Treaty, and adaptation of the CFE treaty. In July, 'experts of the Russian Defence Ministry' were reported to be doubting 'that Russia's military relations with NATO will be fully restored by the end of 1999... they also said that military relations will remain "frozen" not only with the alliance itself but also with its member states that directly participated in the aggression against Yugoslavia'. Indeed, in Brussels on 20 July, 'the first meeting of the Russian-NATO PJC to be held since the bombardment of Yugoslavia, which was scheduled for today, has been postponed indefinitely' (RFE/RL, 22 July 1999). The Prime Minister, Chernomyrdin, said that Russia and NATO were close to nuclear war (Shlapentokh, 2000: 186), and Sergeev stated that he was considering redeploying nuclear weapons in Belarus.

It was quite soon after the start of the Kosovo conflict that Russia renewed its offensive in Chechnya, for a variety of reasons. Arbatov (2000) argued that it was partly a result of the fact that the 'taboo' against using force to solve political problems had been removed, and that it would demonstrate to the West that Russia would accept no meddling in its domestic affairs. The Kosovo conflict upset the 'liberal-statist balance of political elite interests' in Moscow (Wallander, 2000a: paragraph 8).

The new National Security Concept and new Military Doctrine were approved by the Security Council in early 2000. Arbatov credits the Kosovo action with causing 'for the first time since the mid-1980s within operational departments of the General Staff and Armed Forces, the Security Council and Foreign Ministry crisis management groups, and in closed sessions of the Duma, serious discussions [to take] place concerning military conflict with NATO' (Arbatov, 2000: paragraph 34). The Military Doctrine of 2000 made very obvious reference to Kosovo in its outline of the threats facing Russia: 'a destabilizing impact on the military-political situation is exerted by... the utilization of military force as a means of "humanitarian intervention"'. Threats also came from 'the creation (build up) of groups of troops leading to the violation of the existing balance of forces, close to the Russian Federation's state border and the borders of its allies or on the seas adjoining their territories, the introduction of foreign troops in violation of the UN

Charter on the territory of friendly states adjoining the Russian Federation' and so on. The National Security Doctrine of 2000, like the Military Doctrine, emphasised the multilateral world order and attempts to weaken Russia's international influence: 'The level and scope of military threats are growing. Elevated to the rank of strategic doctrine, NATO's transition to the practice of using military force outside its zone of responsibility and without UN Security Council sanction could destabilize the entire global strategic situation'.

Given the nature of NATO's actions in the Balkans, there was a 'new emphasis on building up and modernizing Russia's conventional air defense, air force and naval assets' (Arbatov, 2000: paragraph 65). This was because the Balkan scenario could involve selective air strikes against Russia against which the nuclear reaction would not be effective or proportional. General Aleksandr Lebed proposed at the Federation Council to declare Yugoslavia a zone of Russia's geopolitical interests. Russia was to oppose NATO aggression and provide military assistance. 'According to Lebed, Russia in the role of a fighter would consolidate its dignity and unify the nation. This option in other terms implied confrontation with the West for the sake of domestic spiritual revival and a claim to Great Power status abroad' (Brovkin: 16). As Brovkin argued, Yeltsin was manoeuvring between 'contradictory policies... Russia would not quarrel with NATO too much but would not be too friendly either'.

Some in the Russian elite were quickly cautioning against over-reaction to Kosovo. The interior minister, Sergei Stepashin, for example, said that 'Russia should assume that it will live and work in Europe' (RFE/RL, 19 March 1999). *Izvestiia* too cautioned against a break with the West. The very speed with which relations reverted back to the position of pragmatism, and lost their vitriol is instructive.

General Boris Gromov, a veteran of resistance to Yeltsin in 1993, voiced the opinion that '"The policy of Russia must be principled and firm. We will not accept NATO in the role of the World's policeman." However, Gromov continued, providing military assistance to Yugoslavia would imply a return to the Cold War, which was unacceptable. This political stance was hardly distinguishable from that of Yeltsin's tough rhetoric and no action' (Brovkin: 16). One reason for this was the harsh economic reality. *Izvestiia* (26 March 1999) argued that 'Russia cannot

forget about its economy. While politicians such as Yeltsin, Primakov, Lushkov and Iavlinskii say that they are against NATO bombings in Kosovo, they have to remain on good terms with NATO and the IMF'. In mid-September 1999, the US Secretary of State, after meeting Russia's Minister of Defence, said that agreement on rewriting the ABM treaty was possible. 'Sergeev was more reticent but said Moscow wants to improve military relations with the US even though he was still critical of NATO actions in Kosova' (RFE/RL, 14 September 1999).

Russia clearly reacted to NATO's military actions with a shift in policy, apparently towards rearming and breaking off friendly contact with the Alliance. This might have spelt a major move towards balancing rather than bandwagoning, were it not so short-lived: the pragmatic strategy was set to continue after an initial flurry of activity. And again, this was a result of Russian economic, military and diplomatic weakness.[131] The Kosovo conflict was the low point in Russia NATO relations, and yet, only a year later, was of greatly diminished importance. It shows how realities of the distribution of power remained unaltered, and hence Russia's policies also remained more or less unaltered. While the conflict 'exposed the limits of Moscow's influence in the Russia-NATO consultative mechanisms like the PJC' (Lo, 2002: 106), it also demonstrated that Russia-NATO relations were built on foundations of realistic perceptions that not even this seemingly exceptional event could disturb fundamentally.

The power imbalance allowed NATO to proceed with its plans, while making minor concessions to Russia. Russia was impotent to stop these plans becoming reality. Relations were built on Russia's need to retain contact with the West, to keep the flows of credit coming and to avoid diplomatic isolation, from a position of severe weakness. The prospect of the huge power of NATO increasing and moving ever further eastwards was one that plainly exposed Russia's contemporary weakness. After almost a decade of retreat and of increasing

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[131] A typical example of this had come just before the bombing began, in the counsel of Sergei Markov (Director of the Political Studies Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences) and Vladimir Volkov (Director of the Slavic and Balkan Studies Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences) to the 'Russian government to exploit the Kosovo crisis as an opportunity to instigate anti-American sentiment in Western Europe... a weakened Russia should try to coalesce... particularly with "those West European countries which are not inclined to accept unconditionally the American rules of the game... play, to the full extent, on differences between the European Union and the United States over the issue of the Europeanization of NATO"'. However they cautioned against providing the Serbian forces with S-300 anti-aircraft missiles which would 'result in a cutoff of Western credits to Russia and even in economic sanctions' (NUPI, 5 February 1999).

economic and military decline, both the regional and global balance of power had if anything worsened since the fall of the Soviet Union, primarily as a result of NATO's continuing existence, but also because of China's economic resurgence, the failure of the CIS and the catastrophic performance of the military in Chechnya. Russia was therefore forced to retain relations with NATO, as Primakov, Arbatov and others pointed out, in order not to be plunged into an even worse situation of isolation.

A survey undertaken among the Russian foreign policy elite in 2000 found a strongly 'realistic' attitude to NATO enlargement. '"Fundamentalist nationalists" and some "pragmatic nationalists" predicted a strong Russian response, suggesting variously that military spending would rise, there would be a new arms race, the "nuclear factor" would be "reconsidered", and new allies would be found. For the most part, however, interviewees understood that economic weakness limits Russia's ability to respond' (Light et al., 2000: 6).

The Russian elite throughout the 1990s constantly tested the limits of the diplomatic means at its disposal, yet was frustrated time and again. 'Russia failed to achieve the strategic goals defined in the late 1990s in the international arena. It was unable to prevent NATO's enlargement, or NATO's anti-Belgrade operation, or the US withdrawal from the ABM Treaty. Nor was Russia able to integrate the post-Soviet space and consolidate its position as a leading force across the former Soviet Union. Russia's persistent support of [Milosevic] everywhere, including the United Nations, led to the eventual loss of Russia's influence in the Balkans, as well as undermining the role of the UN Security Council and, consequently, the role of Russia as its permanent member' (Fedorov, 2002: 4).

According to Pikayev (2000: 1-2), both the Atlanticist and the later consensus foreign policies failed. 'The chain of geopolitical defeats in the 1990s, as they are perceived in Moscow, marked the failure of [the] two major foreign policy strategies that Russia desperately attempted to pursue at the end of the 20th century... in 1996-98 the new strategy [associated with Primakov, the use of bargaining chips to seek concessions from the West] brought certain gains. International assistance... finally began to arrive, though not in the quantity required by the tremendous mission of transforming the Russian economy. Although NATO expanded eastward, it had to provide Moscow with some

important albeit non-binding security assurances in exchange. The unfair START-II was slightly corrected. The doors of some Western institutions were finally opened. Russia adhered to G-7, the Council of Europe, and the Paris Club'. Yet it was also true that 'Since the end of the USSR Moscow has lost its old clients and allies without acquiring any real new allies and partners in the international arena' (Rogov 1999: 2). By the end of the decade the assertiveness that arose as a result of the failure of the concessionary policies of 1991-1992 was tempered by a very powerful realisation of Russia's weakness. Thus a form of stability had been created, unhappy though many in the elite were, demonstrating how the simple imbalance of power had shaped Russian foreign policy.

CHAPTER 6
RUSSIA AND THE EU:
THE NEOCLASSICAL REALIST EXPLANATION

While NATO was a high-profile foreign policy priority for Russia in the 1990s, there was little interest shown in the EU by the great majority of the Russian elite for much of the decade. Relations between Russia and the EU were generally smooth and low-key.

This was partly because there was often a genuine coincidence of interest and partly because the EU was a political-economic organization, rather than a military alliance (although attempts were made to boost the EU's military capabilities) – which did not threaten Russia's physical security. The EU's lack of military muscle did not make the EU unimportant – in economic terms it was of crucial importance – but it does help explain why it was not as high on the list of priorities for the Russian elite as NATO. In fact, the EU's importance to Russia economically did belatedly lead to some discord. There were some obstacles to smooth relations but they tended to be dealt with in a fairly discreet manner.

Russia's changing perception of the EU

The unthreatening expansion

Unlike Russia's relations with NATO, those with the EU did not undergo a major shift as the Atlanticist period ended and the leadership moved to a more hardline, 'independent' foreign policy. Nor did the EU play a major role in causing that shift. In fact, the EU's plans for expansion were contrasted positively with those of NATO. In May 1996, for example, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Sergei Krilov, stated that Russia's policy was to object to eastern European states joining NATO's military structures, and 'urged those countries to consider joining Ireland which belongs to the EU but not NATO' (RFE/RL, 22 May, 1996). In February

1997, Primakov, on a visit to Denmark, stated that the accession of the Baltic States to NATO would be 'unacceptable' but added that he would see their entry to the EU as a 'positive development' (RFE/RL, 27 February, 1997). In December 1997, 'Russia's Foreign Ministry reacted positively... to the EU's decision... to invite five former Communist countries (along with Cyprus) to become candidates for membership... spokesman Sergei Nesterushkin welcomed the EU actions, depicting them as part of an objective tendency toward economic integration on the European continent. He was also careful to place them in the context of Russia's own improving relations with the EU, which, Nesterushkin said, were reflected in an EU-Russian partnership agreement that came into force on December 1' (NUPI, 16 December 1997).[132]

The EU was therefore viewed, unlike NATO, as an ally in international affairs. This was because the EU was a vital trade partner, rather than a military rival. The EU was also seen as a counterweight to the influence of the US in global and European affairs. The relationship was often characterised with the word 'partnership'. In December 1993, for example, Yeltsin hailed the signing of an agreement with the EU on trade relations as an unprecedented event. 'The East and the West of Europe took a big step toward one another... The declaration we have signed guarantees that henceforth we will... get closer... We are all Europeans'. He also said that Russia was ready to "become a real partner of Western Europe"' (RFE/RL, 10 December 1993). This tone remained consistent into the mid-1990s, as when Yeltsin and the EU leaders Wim Kok (President of the Council) and Jacques Santer (President of the Commission) met in March 1997 to discuss trade matters, for example. 'Yeltsin said afterwards that the "partnership" between Russia and the EU is the "key to strengthening security and stability on the continent"... Kok noted that, while Yeltsin reiterated Russia's opposition to NATO expansion, he did not oppose the EU's parallel plans to expand into eastern Europe (RFE/RL, 4 March 1997). In January 1999, Vasilii Likachev, Russia's permanent representative to the European Communities, argued that 'Strategic partnership with EU is needed [for the 21st century]... both sides have moved from building legal and organizational foundations to the practice of systematic cooperation

[132] This was the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA), one of the foundations of Russia-EU relations of the 1990s, and discussed in detail below.

between them... awareness by the EU and the Russian Federation of the objective nature of their relations, their strategic functions, the active role in creating a multidimensional and multipolar world' (*Summary of World Broadcasts*, 4 January 1999).

Despite these positive sentiments, Russia's leaders generally saw the EU as a low priority. Eggert (1997: paragraphs 4-6) suggested that 'it sometimes seems that decision-makers in Moscow still think about the EU in 1970s terms. For them it is still the European Economic Community, a dull entity designed to solve problems which are barely of any importance to Russia. It is impossible otherwise to explain why nobody in the Kremlin cares to appoint a new ambassador to the EU for a third consecutive year'. The EU barely registered on the political seismograph (Eggert, 2002[133]).

Economic promise and threat

The EU's importance to Russia was primarily economic. Its vast economic power was in stark contrast to that of Russia, but also held the promise of almost 400 million wealthy EU citizens: a huge potential market for Russian goods.[134] The EU states were also thirsty for Russian oil and gas. The EU was dependent on Russia's supplies of natural gas. Russia 'provides 36% of the Union's gas consumption and about 10% of its oil imports' (Aalto, 2001: 12, footnote 13). Close economic relations with (as well as credits from) the EU were vital for Russian economic prospects.[135] While 'exports to CIS states between 1992 and 1994 remained relatively steady at around US$ 14 billion... exports to Europe rose in the same period from US$ 31 billion to US$ 42 billion' (World Bank, 1996). The EU was 'the world's largest trading bloc and Russia's most important trading partner, accounting for 40 percent of Russia's external trade in 1995' (*Moscow Times*, 1 March 1997). Trade in general rapidly increased as a share of Russia's gross

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[133] Interviewed in London by the author (5 and 6 December 2002), Eggert said that 'Ignoring the EU meant Russia was not interested in the real big issue. The pragmatists were in the end the romantics, because NATO enlargement implications are very few. While EU enlargement has negative implications.' This fact was belatedly realised by the Russian leadership.

[134] As described in Chapter 4, gross domestic product in the 15 EU states (US$ at PPP) in 1991 was US$ 6,404 billion (when Russia's was US$ 1,148) and US$ 8,780 in 1999 (when Russia's was US$ 856).

[135] Apart from its own economic importance as a trade partner, the EU played an important role in helping Russia along the path to membership of the World Trade Organization (WTO).

national product; Russia's trade balance with the EU was 4001.8 million ECU in 1993, 6231.9 in 1994 and 6396.1 in 1995, dropping a little to 3800 million in 1996. By the last year of the 1990s, Russian exports to the EU totalled 21.2 billion euros, and imports 11.5 billion euros.[136] Oil and gas exports at this time formed approximately 45% of Russia's exports to the EU, equivalent to 20% of the total world Russian exports (Jensen, 2001: 14). In 1998, while Russia was 'the EU's sixth most important trading partner,' the EU was in turn 'substantially dependent on supplies of energy from Russia' (Danilov & de Spiegeleire, 1998: 8).

Thus within a few years the EU was easily Russia's biggest trading partner. This was still true 'despite the steep fall in EU exports to Russia after the 1998 financial crisis. In 1999, the EU still accounted for 33% of Russia's trade, and Russia today enjoys a trade surplus of well over 10 billion Euro with the EU' (Prodi, 2000). Such a relationship created 'the most durable foundation for further deepening the cooperation between the two parties... It is with Europe that Russia can establish the most effective forms of economic interaction: deepening specialization and large-scale cooperation, which would mean interdependence and the intertwining of economies. At the same time, the European model best guarantees the efficient modernization of Russia's economic system' (Gutnik, 2003).[137]

However, trade was imbalanced: while Russia supplied the EU with hydrocarbons and other raw materials it imported in turn manufactured goods. This was grist to the mill of those who argued that the West wanted to keep Russia as a backward supplier of raw materials. Russia was more interested in developing cooperation in high-tech sectors. It was recognised even by the EU that 'the structure of bilateral trade continues to display a marked imbalance, with fuel and primary products representing the bulk of Russian exports... as opposed to the

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[136] Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation Information and Press Department (October 2000), *Fact Sheet. Russia – the European Union*. Online at: http://www.ln.mid.ru/brp_4.nsf/e78a48070f128a7b43256999005bcbb3/763cda418e9868dd4325699c00260c21?OpenDocument.

[137] The EU was the largest provider of aid to Russia. Russia received € 2.281 billion in EU assistance between 1991 and 2000 (European Commission, 2003). The country 'also benefited from a number of other programmes, such as the Nuclear Safety programme, various Inter-State programmes, the Democracy Programme and small projects programmes. The EU Member States have provided substantial assistance to Russia' (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, 1999: 2). EU countries accounted for 60 per cent of the total economic assistance provided to Russia by the West in 1990–1994' (Zagorski, 1997: 527).

predominance of finished industrial goods in imports from the EU' (European Commission, 2002).[138] It was never clear how exactly Russia was to compete with the western European countries on equal terms. The most frequently heard call was for the EU to remove tariff barriers from Russian imports; this would not necessarily remove the problem of imbalanced terms of trade, but it would open the market for Russian goods such as steel and textiles. The right to export these without burdensome duties would at least provide Russia with hard cash.

Protective tariffs and the potential for anti-dumping legislation against Russian exports to the EU were a threat to Russia's effort to rejuvenate its economy and hence rebuild its power. 'Russian officials complained in 1997 that EU trade barriers, which affect 40 percent of Russian exports, along with subsidized European exports, cost the country $1 billion a year in lost trade' (NUPI, 22 July 1997). The official foreign policy and national security documents made clear that this was regarded as a threat to Russian national security.

Economic relations and national security

Effective economic development, relying in part on favourable terms of trade, was explicitly recognised as fundamental to the assurance of national security, linked to military and technological potential. The 1993 Military Doctrine did indeed argue that the methods of achieving the economic foundations necessary to support a sufficient military capability were 'the creation of the best possible system of weapons, military and special hardware, and other equipment ensuring the enhancement of combat efficiency by means of qualitative indicators and based on plans for the organizational development and operational use of the Russian Federation Armed Forces and other troops... the anticipatory operational, scientific, technical, and economic justification of the requirements for weapons, military and special hardware, and other equipment, and also the overall requirements of these, taking into consideration the long-term financing of research, development, and production'.

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[138] The relatively low quality of Russian manufactures meant that they were unable to compete with their Western counterparts. On the contrary, 'emerging and fast growing Asian markets are located to the south of Russia. They will need Russian energy resources and may accept relatively cheap... Russian machinery and missile, space and nuclear equipment and technologies' (Pikayev, 2000: 3).

Economic growth was important not only for the crude maintenance of the military machine, but also because it would enable the country to develop more broadly as a member of the advanced nations, with an educated, technologically proficient and healthy population. The five foreign policy priorities outlined by Primakov in March 1998 in a speech to the Council on Foreign and Defence Policy included Russia's 'smooth integration into the world economy as an equal member... promoting industrial restructuring, which would be financed primarily by increased arms exports; and expanding the amount of Russian capital invested abroad' (Hoffman, 2000: 82-83). As Primakov's successor, Ivanov, stated at the end of the decade, 'Despite Russia's limited resource base for its foreign policy... we remain fully convinced that Russia still has sufficient grounds on which to build itself a dignified place in the world. To achieve this, it is essential that we continue to strengthen the Russian state, consolidate Russian society and enter a period of sustainable economic growth as soon as possible' (Ivanov, 2000: paragraph 6). Yet this was not achieved in the 1990s (hence Ivanov's words), but was in the event an uphill and unsuccessful struggle.

The 2000 Military Doctrine explicitly noted the role of foreign trade in reversing the unfavourable situation, stating plainly that 'The main priority in the foreign policy of the Russian Federation in international economic relations is to promote the development of the national economy, which, in conditions of globalization, is unthinkable without broad integration of Russia in the system of world economic ties. In order to achieve these objectives, it is necessary: to ensure favourable external conditions for forming a market-oriented economy in our country... Russia shall promote the formation of a fair international trade system with a full-fledged participation of the Russian Federation in international economic organizations that ensure protection of the national interests of our country in those organizations... Russia shall... uphold its interests in foreign markets and oppose discrimination of domestic manufacturers and exporters'.[139]

Given the huge importance of trade with the EU, and the recognized link between economic revival and national security, it was logical that Russia's relations with the EU were sensitive to the issue of tariff barriers. When they were

[139] The EU is not mentioned in the Military Doctrine adopted in 2000 (Light et al., 2000b: 501), although it is mentioned in the National Security Doctrine of 2000 (see pp.107-108).

perceived to be harming Russian economic interests, the Russian elite did belatedly come to recognise the potential and threat contained therein.

Enlargement and the eastward movement of tariff barriers: a rising sense of threat

In the mid-1990s there was an increasing recognition in Russia of the importance of the EU, as expansion became official policy and a timetable was developed.[140] Some difficulties in relations did surface. By 1995 there were EU (and Council of Europe) criticisms of Russian actions in Chechnya, indignation in Russia over tariff barriers and anti-dumping legislation, and later, the issue of Kaliningrad. Belated recognition of the promise – and potential harm – of EU enlargement came in 1997 when the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) was ratified and came into effect after three years of delay. The delay between signing and ratification of the PCA was mainly a result of the Chechen conflict.

Some members of the elite (those whose work was related to economics) raised the issues that could have a negative impact on Russia's economy. From 1997 onwards, the issue of trading rights caused increasing resentment in Russia (although Russia was given Most Favoured Nation trading status by the EU, some anti-dumping legislation remained in place). But as with NATO there was a mixture of positive and negative perceptions of the EU among the Russian elite, though the balance in this case was firmly towards the positive. Prime Minister Chernomyrdin, in July 1997 for example, while calling for Russia to join the EU (saying Russia ought to become an EU member in the 'not-too-distant future') and stating that Russia and the EU had increasing common interests, added that anti-dumping measures were extremely unfair to Russia and harmful to Russia's trade.

In January 1998, Primakov spoke in Brussels at the first session of the EU-Russia Cooperation Council to discuss trade. He complained of EU discrimination

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[140] In 1993 the Copenhagen European Council decided in principle to enlarge the Union to include the countries of central and eastern Europe. The Luxembourg European Council 'announced the forthcoming accession negotiations in December 1997, and in March 1998 talks began with an initial group of six countries: Cyprus, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, the Czech Republic and Slovenia (formerly known as the Luxembourg group). Malta, which had withdrawn its original application for membership in 1996, resubmitted it in September 1998. The Cardiff European Council of June 1998 welcomed the European strategy to prepare Turkey for membership. In March 1999 the Berlin European Council agreed on the financial instruments to be used as part of the pre-accession strategy... In December 1999 the Helsinki European Council confirmed the importance of the enlargement process, in which 13 candidate countries including Turkey would have equal rights' (Integration Office Switzerland-Europe, 2003).

against Russian goods, and 'told EU foreign ministers that Russia will not meet EU demands on cutting import tariffs. The EU has applied anti-dumping duties to more than a dozen Russian goods... [that] Russians estimate costs the country about $1 billion annually' (RFE/RL, 28 January 1998).

Chernomyrdin addressed the Consultative Council on Foreign Investment in March 1998. By now the charge was that '"discrimination" against Russia in trade policies costs Russia at least $1.7 billion each year... the government considers membership in the World Trade Organization to be of "vital importance" for the economy. However, he said WTO membership will make sense only if the "international trade regime" with respect to Russia improves, adding that "our obligation to open up our markets will be subject to such improvement"... The EU Council of Ministers has postponed indefinitely consideration of whether to recognize Russia as a market economy' (NUPI, 16 March 1998). Expansion would mean that any protective EU barriers would be moved eastwards, covering the newly admitted member states which were of great importance to Russian industry in the very recent past, resulting in 'a discriminatory situation for the Russian products... in the Central and Eastern Europe and the Baltic states as well' (Pichugin, 1996: 93).[141] In April 1998, Russia (and China) gained concessions from the EU in terms of their market status.

The major foreign policy documents show how in the official view the EU grew in significance over the decade. The potential negative aspects of the relationship were clearly expressed in the 1997 and 2000 documents, and a sense of increasing economic threat is apparent. The 1997 National Security document explicitly noted that 'The share of foreign trade in Russia's GNP has soared unprecedentedly; nonetheless, Russia's integration into the global market often takes place on unfavourable terms'. The second item in the section on Russia's national security threats states that: 'The current economic crisis is seen as the main threat to the Russian Federation's national security'.

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[141] The European Commission argued, however, that enlargement of the Union, far from pressing the Schengen curtain further east, would in fact be to Russia's economic benefit: 'Different macro-economic studies have invariably concluded that the effects of enlargement will be positive for the Russian economy... for Russia EU enlargement will simplify and enhance access to the markets of current candidate countries as well as to the EU as a whole. Russian companies established in the new member states will also be able to open branches in other EU Member States. For investors, high standards of protection will be applicable' (European Commission, 2004a).

The 2000 National Security Concept again states that Russia's national interests may be assured only on the basis of sustainable economic development. Therefore 'Russia's national interests in economics are of key importance.' The trade issue was seen as fundamental to national security. Threats to the national security included 'domination of exports by fuel, raw materials and energy components of imports by food and consumer items, including consumer essentials.... Of key importance are relations with the European Union (EU). The ongoing processes within the EU are having a growing impact on the dynamic of the situation in Europe. These are the EU expansion, transition to a common currency, the institutional reform, and emergence of a joint foreign policy and a policy in the area of security, as well as a defence identity. Russia will seek due respect for its interests... The Russian Federation views the EU as one of its main political and economic partners and will strive to develop with it an intensive, stable and long-term cooperation devoid of expediency fluctuations... Concrete problems, primarily the problem of an adequate respect for the interests of the Russian side in the process of the EU expansion and reform, will be dealt with on the basis of the Strategy for the Development of Relations between the Russian Federation and the European Union, approved in 1999'.

The EU's lack of military threat

One important reason for the generally positive, low-key relationship, in the realist perspective, was that the EU was a political and economic union rather than a military alliance; and though efforts were made to increase its military clout, these came to little, and were perceived in Moscow as amounting to very little. However, by the end of the decade it had become clear that the EU's lack of military development was closely connected to NATO's continuing presence in Europe, and hence that NATO and EU enlargement were intimately connected. EU states spent little on defence, apparently assured (despite public rhetoric) that their security was guaranteed by NATO. The benefits, as the Russian side saw it, of the EU's lack of military threat were nullified by this fact.

The EU did, however, raise the possibility from time to time in the 1990s of creating a purely European army. One way of doing so was through the reinvigoration of the nine-nation Western European Union (WEU). In 1991-92, the

WEU began increasing its military capabilities in order to be able to undertake military missions on behalf of the EU, with a 'defence planning cell, satellite-interpretation centre and situation centre' (Gordon, 1997b: 257-258). NATO's January 1994 declaration that it supported the development of a European Security and defence Identity (ESDI), and its June 1996 agreement to create the possibility of WEU-led Combined Joint Task Forces (CJTF), 'were both important steps in the direction of European visibility in international security' (Gordon, 1997b: 259). Yet the WEU was and remained an ineffective tool and was incapable of carrying out any meaningful operations. The ESDI was seen as a means of increasing European countries' independence from the US – both in some European countries and in Russia (Khalosha, 2002).[142]

The official position, reached after delicate negotiations among European countries and between them and Washington, was that 'The Europeans in the European Union Treaty concluded in Maastricht have reaffirmed their goal of a "European Security and Defence Identity" (ESDI) [part of but apart from NATO], and at its Summit in April 1999 NATO and the US endorsed that goal. ESDI would give strength to another European aspiration: the search for a Common Foreign and Security Policy (*European Security*, 2000: paragraph 1). In December 1999, at the Helsinki European Council, the EU's planned military capacity acquired the name of the Common European Security and Defence Policy (CESDP). At the Cologne European Council in June of that year, EU leaders agreed that 'the Union must have the capacity for autonomous action, backed by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them, and the readiness to do so, in order to respond to international crises without prejudice to actions by NATO'.

There is no evidence that the Russian elite saw the development of an EU military force as anything other than vaguely positive, because it was a potential counterweight to NATO. It was clear to all that the EU did not have the capacity to act independently of NATO in any meaningful way.

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[142] Interviewed by the author in Moscow on 17 July 2002, Boris Khalosha of the Institute of World Economy and International Relations, Russian Academy of Sciences (IMEMO), suggested that, 'judging from the documents, many Europeans think that Europe should be independent from the US. That's why our government has over recent years conducted negotiations with the EU.'

Kaliningrad

The Kaliningrad exclave became an important issue in Russia-EU relations once it became clear that the EU's enlargement, set for early in the 21st century, would mean that this part of the Russian Federation would be completely surrounded by EU states; this raised the possibility that Kaliningrad would be physically cut off from the rest of the Russian Federation.

The unique importance of the Kaliningrad region arose as a result of 'its history and geopolitical location. During the Cold War it was considered an important Soviet military outpost in the confrontation with NATO, and it was one of the most highly militarized areas in Europe. The headquarters of the Baltic Sea Fleet was (and is) located there); the 11th Guards Army... was deployed [there]' (Sergounin, 2000: 1). Yet 'the military significance of Kaliningrad has dramatically declined in the 1990s. In late 1997 the Kaliningrad Special Defense District (the only remnant of the former Baltic Military District) was abolished (including the 11th Army). The residual land units were subordinated to the commander of the Baltic Sea Fleet, which was radically reduced' (Sergounin, 2000: 1).

Some nationalists in the Russian elite did perceive a threat in this situation. Yet it was equally possible to see positives in the Kaliningrad situation. Trenin's call, for example, for Russia to seek to be a part of the new Europe led him to see the Kaliningrad issue in a positive light. 'The entry of even one of the Baltic countries in the EU... Would create a situation in which everyone would stand to gain... Russia itself would have one foot in the union. Russian capital occupies a solid position in Latvia and Estonia. Russian banks and enterprises are growing stronger there. The hundreds of thousands of ethnic Russians who would undoubtedly be quickly integrated in the new supernational organization could become, in the words of a Scandinavian diplomat, the first "Eurorussians". Not only Kaliningrad, but the entire Russian north-west, including St Petersburg, would get the chance to speed up its development' (Trenin in *Moscow Times,* July 16 1997). Such a perception was possible owing to the positive relationship between Russia and the EU. It was a good example of the manner in which the EU might have been considered a geopolitical threat – and was seen as such by some in

Russia – but owing to the EU's lack of military capabilities, the issue was predominantly viewed (after some negotiations) as one that could be dealt with fairly easily.

The EU was in the main seen to be a worthwhile partner for Russia. Russia was sympathetic to the EU's expansion plans because they were not perceived as a threat to Russia's national security, and the potential problems over trade and Kaliningrad were considered to be surmountable.

A steadily developing relationship

Russia and the EU signed a series of important bilateral agreements, which dealt with issues of trade, the environment and general political relations. These were a product of the generally close and effective interaction that had developed, but were subject to a series of delays as Chechnya and other human rights issues, and questions of tariff barriers, were raised. Nevertheless, Russian policy moved in a fairly untroubled way towards forging a deeper and closer relationship with the EU by the end of the decade, in keeping with the manner in which the elite in Russia perceived the organisation.

The early development of formal links: the EU makes the running

The Russian elite were not particularly interested in the EU, at least in the early 1990s, and it was Brussels that was 'the real initiator' of relations between Russia and the EU. 'Its TACIS Programme, for instance, was the instrument (and the only one between 1992-1994) for introducing the EU to Russia's central and provincial bureaucrats and businessmen' (Malgin, 2001: paragraph 23). As mentioned, the EU was the largest provider of economic and technical assistance to Russia. 'The bulk comes from the TACIS programme in support of the economic and democratic reform process in Russia. The focus is on institutional, legal and administrative reform, including the development of independent media and civil society; fiscal and banking sector reform and social reform... as well as Russia's eventual accession to the [World Trade Organization]' (European Commission, 2003).

Kozyrev made clear his intention of joining at least one European institution very early in his tenure as Foreign Minister – not the EU, but the Council of Europe: he stated in 1992 that, 'the task of reintegration into the family of European civilization and developing a state based on the rule of law mandates that Russia join the Council of Europe' (Kozyrev, 1992: 290). Though the Council is not an EU institution, it was often seen as being so (confused perhaps with the Council of the European Union). Membership of the Council could, however, be seen as a positive step towards integration with Europe and to closer relations with the Union, and was perhaps used by the EU as a means of reaching out beyond formal membership towards the development of closer ties.[143] Membership could also be seen as a sop to states that would not be accepted in the near future into the EU itself. Russia did manage to join the Council, but only after a stop-start sequence of events that snagged on human rights violations perpetrated by the Russian side in the Chechen War.[144]

Russian attempts to remove trade barriers

As noted above, Russia gradually came to understand the importance of trade with the EU and the damage that trade barriers could do to Russia's national interests. There was therefore powerful motivation to attempt to have these barriers removed. Fortunately the EU was keen, for a variety of reasons, to work closely and make compromises: the EU was strongly in favour, in fact, of working closely with all of the former Soviet countries for political and economic reasons but Russia's geopolitical and economic importance made it a priority.

Russian leaders made public and vociferous arguments against the EU's trade restrictions from the mid-1990s onwards, and while Russia was never considered for membership of the EU (in which such barriers would be completely

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[143] Many eastern European states 'came to regard the Council as the essential "gateway" organization for integration with the EU and NATO' (Blocker, 1997: 1-2).

[144] Russia applied for membership of the Council in May 1992 and was accepted in early 1996. An official invitation was issued in February of that year. The Russian Duma approved membership on 21 February, and the Federation Council the next day. Igor Ivanov (then First Deputy Foreign Minister) said it was in Russia's national interest to join. Vladimir Lukin (Chairman of the Duma's Foreign Affairs Committee) assured colleagues that it would be to Russia's benefit despite the US$ 25 million annual dues. In Strasbourg a week or so later Russia officially joined. 'From the political perspective, the Russian authorities, while recognizing the general importance of joining the Council of Europe, were aware that this was not a main priority in the context of ensuring Russia an adequate place in the new European architecture' (Zagorski, 1997: 537-538).

and automatically removed), the EU did show willingness to make concessions in the face of Russian hostility. During talks in Brussels in July 1997, Jacques Santer offered to initiate a policy review of restrictions on Russian imports, 'but the proposal was dismissed by the Russian side as a "delaying tactic"' (NUPI, 22 July 1997), although a deal was signed by Chernomyrdin with Distrigas to deliver 500 million m^3 of gas the following year. 'Russia wants the EU to classify it as a "market economy" rather than a transition economy, a move that would make it more difficult for European producers to bring anti-dumping suits against Russia exporters' (NUPI, 22 July 1997). Yeltsin had made the same point a few days earlier, and in June 1997 First Deputy Prime Minister Boris Nemtsov had refused to meet Leon Brittan (European Commission Vice President). There was also a continuing row over quotas in the textile trade.

In April 1998, however, perhaps as a result of these very public complaints, and the coming into force of the PCA, 'the foreign ministers of the EU member states agreed during a 27 April meeting in Luxembourg to stop classifying Russia as a non-market economy... the change will allow Russian industries to be considered on a case-by-case basis when the EU is weighing whether anti-dumping penalties are justified' (NUPI, 27 March 1998). The EU supported Russia's accession to the WTO, 'which would lead to a further liberalisation of trade, lowering of tariffs and adjustments of competition and state aid practices' (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, 1999: 1).[145]

Finally, in August 1999, the Russian official responsible for working with the G8 (Aleksandr Livshits) said that Moscow did not oppose the eastward expansion of the EU but wanted 'a voice' in the process so that nothing would be done that would 'make anything worse for Russia'. Livshits said that expansion 'could mean the inclusion of countries which "have historically served as major markets for Russia" and that the West acknowledges that "there is a problem" if expansion proceeds in ways that fail to take Moscow's concerns into account' (RFE/RL, 24 August 1999). The issue had not gone away, and was never resolved,

[145] It should be noted that Russia's often asserted desire to join the WTO was also not helped by the following, from the Concept of National Security of 1997: 'The Russian economy must switch over to the sustainable-development model featuring state regulation of economic processes... that would ensure a well-balanced solution of socio-economic tasks and environmental-protection problems with a view to satisfying the requirements of present-day and future generations'.

but its impact was lessened by the PCA. The process which led to its eventually being signed showed how Russia was prepared to negotiate hard on the issue, though it never came anywhere near the importance for the Russian elite of the PfP or Founding Act.

The PCA came into the picture in 1994 after the initial role played by TACIS in providing a positive start to Russia-EU relations and the rapid development of trade relations. It was the major treaty between Russia and the EU of the decade, laying the groundwork for the numerous and 'constant' contacts that were to follow. However after the document was signed, the first Chechen campaign, which began in December 1994, led to suspension of the ratification process of the PCA in EU countries, with only the earlier Interim Agreement serving as the basis for future relations.[146] The European Parliament voted on 19 January 1995 to put the partnership agreement on hold, and the Interim Agreement on Trade and Trade-related Matters was to operate until the PCA came into force in December 1997.[147]

Chechnya – a temporary problem for EU-Russia relations

The EU made several statements on Chechnya in early 1995, as the brutal Russian campaign led to well-documented human rights abuses. In January, the Commission of the EU 'declared it would not forward the Interim Agreement [on trade and commercial aspects of the PCA]... Instead, the commission first wanted to discuss freezing the whole matter among EU countries as a protest against Russian actions in Chechnya' (Pursiainen, 1999: 149). On 10 January, the Council of Europe made the announcement that it was putting Russia's membership application on hold. The EU also raised issues of human rights clauses within the PCA. On January 17 and January 23 1995, for example, the EU referred to Article 2: 'Respect for the democratic principles and human rights as defined in particular in the Helsinki Final Act and the Charter of Paris for a New Europe underpin the internal and external policies of the Parties... the Partnership Agreement itself was

[146] Up to that point relations were regulated by the Interim Trade Agreement, which 'provided WTO-based treatment for EU-Russia trade, removing many restrictions previously imposed on exports to the EU' (European Commission, 2000).
[147] The PCA, it was hoped, would lead to improvements in this field. In fact, after the PCA came into effect trade remained consistent with its pre-PCA levels, both in terms of imports to and exports from Russia.

not in force, however... and "sources" from the Commission informed journalists in December 1994 that because of this, appeal could not be made to the articles of the agreement referring to human and minority rights' (Pursiainen, 1999: 135, footnote 96).

At the Istanbul OSCE summit in November 1999, there were criticisms of Russian actions in Chechnya that led to an angry response from Yeltsin. As *Izvestiia* reported (19 November 1999), 'Yeltsin left Istanbul and the OSCE summit with a smile on his face but he was angry. He listened to what Chirac and Schroeder had to say about Chechnya and then he got up and left'. In December *Izvestiia* reported that Chechnya and EU were the main themes in Helsinki. 'On the eve of the summit, two positions were being expressed about the Chechen conflict. One was to put the harshest pressure possible on Russia, and imposing sanctions and to recall all EU ambassadors from Russia. The second was to condemn that war in Chechnya and leave the sanctions for later. The second position won... Sergei Shoigu[148] has offered to enter negotiations with Maskhadov[149] and Russia is willing to accept criticism from the West which means that there is no need for confrontation'. The two sides had made concessions, and in the end a joint communiqué was issued that included the bland comment: 'The European Union and the Russian Federation exchanged views on the situation in the Northern Caucasus.' (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, 1999). The rest of the communiqué dealt with general matters. In other words, Chechnya had ceased to be an important issue, and it was merely on the level of the faintest of rhetorical criticisms that any reproach was to be made from then on.

Towards the end of Yeltsin's period as President, in October 1999, the Finnish Foreign Minister Tarja Halonen 'warned Moscow that its ongoing offensive against Chechen rebels and its failure to meet human rights obligations more generally could impede the building of stronger Russian-EU ties' (NUPI, 12 October 1999). Yet again it was clear that 'the most important aspect of the crisis may have been that the EU and Russia confirmed their willingness and ability to follow a course of cooperation in spite of deep disagreement in a sensitive area

[148] Minister of Civil Defence, State Emergencies and Natural Disasters.
[149] Leader of the Chechen forces, and winner of presidential elections in the republic in 1997.

which is and will in the near future be much more vulnerable than trade and economic matters' (Borko, 1997: 482).

Ratification of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement

Prior to the signing of the PCA in 1994, the President of Russia, the European Council and the European Commission had (in November 1993) signed a Political Declaration that provided a basis for 'permanent political dialogue and a system of regular consultations at different levels on the whole spectrum of political, economic and other issues of mutual interest' (Danilov & de Spiegeleire, 1998: 9). With the start of peace negotiations in the Chechen republic, the ratification process resumed: in October-November 1996 the PCA was ratified by the State Duma and the Federation Council, in October 1997 its ratification was completed by the EU member-states' (Delegation of the European Commission's to Russia, 2004). When the Agreement on Partnership and Cooperation with the EU was finally ratified by the Duma in October 1996, Vladimir Lukin declared that it 'was no less important than START II' (Donaldson & Nogee, 2000: 254). This view is justified on two counts.

First, the PCA paved the way for Russia's accession to the World Trade Organization and led to improved trading rights for Russia with the EU, which would be even more important once expansion got under way. The Agreement stated, in its preamble, that 'Considering the commitment of the Parties to liberalize trade, based on the principles contained in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade... and taking into account the establishment of the [World Trade Organization]... Recognizing that Russia is no longer a state trading country... [but] a country with an economy in transition and that continued progress towards a market economy will be fostered by cooperation between the Parties in the forms set out in this Agreement... have agreed [in Article 1] to promote trade and investment and harmonious economic relations between the Parties based on the principles of market economy and so to foster sustainable development in the Parties' (The European Commission, 2004b). Under the terms of the PCA, 'Russia receives far better treatment from the EU than from its other major trading partners, as it has Most-Favoured Nation status, whereby no quantitative limitations are

applied except on exports of certain steel products (which represent only 4% of bilateral trade)' (European Commission's Delegation to Russia, 2004).

Second, improved economic relations would lead to stronger political ties (Borko, 1997: 481). The PCA drew Russia more closely into the European political framework and hence gave it a formal place in Europe.[150] It went into great detail on the political aspects of the relationship, establishing, 'an institutional, political and administrative framework to facilitate all forms of bilateral cooperation between Russia and the EU... [and aiming] to develop close political relations by starting regular dialogue on political issues' (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland, 1999: 1). The whole process therefore represented something of a victory for Russian diplomacy.

The signing of the PCA took place at the same time as the PfP (Jensen, 2001: 8). It was complemented by two 'unilaterally adopted "strategies" addressed by each side to the other. Russia's attitude towards the EU's forthcoming enlargement, unlike that of NATO, was illustrated by the fact that 'paradoxically, for a time Moscow seemed to welcome this prospect even more enthusiastically than the EU's participants did – apparently, as a preferable alternative to the enlargement of NATO' (Baranovsky, 2000: 452).

The EU Common Strategy and Russia's Medium-Term Strategy

Russia was selected as the EU's first partner for a Common Strategy, adopted by the Union in areas where members have important common interests. The EU-Russia Strategy came into existence in June 1999 at the Cologne Summit, and formed, along with the PCA, the political basis for EU-Russia relations. The Common Strategy 'uses the PCA channels and is meant to reinvigorate the PCA. It also properly reformulates the overall economic objective of the PCA by calling for the creation of a "common economic and social space" in Europe' (Prodi, 2000).

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[150] In May 1996 'the EU Council of Ministers approved an Action Plan for Russia... In the area of security in Europe, a provision was made for "security working group" troika meetings with Russia, the first of which took place on 10 October 1996 and focused on cooperation in the elaboration of a "Security Model for the twenty-first century" within the OSCE framework, where the EU underlined its interest in the "full involvement of Russia in the development of a comprehensive security architecture in which Russia has its due place". These... meetings with Russia have taken place at regular intervals [and] at no point did the turbulent negotiations between NATO and Russia in the period 1995-1997 affect this EU-Russia dialogue' (Danilov & de Spiegeleire, 1998: 9).

The Russian response to the EU was made in its 'Medium-Term Strategy for the Development of Relations between the Russian Federation and the European Union (2000-2010) – overall the Russian response in this document was positive, but did contain tough language in keeping with the 'independent' 'consensus' style of foreign policy and the usual areas of contention with the EU. Indeed, 'compared to the EU strategy, the Russian declaration contains important differences... Whereas the EU Strategy sees the intensification of EU-Russian relations as a means for the strengthening of a liberal and democratic world order, the Russian Strategy underlines the goals of creation of a "multipolar world" and improvement of "economic security"... In more concrete terms, the Russian declaration also contains considerations, which are not in accordance with the views of the EU, for example that the EU-Russia cooperation should contribute to the consolidation of the Russian role as leading force in the creation of a new system for intergovernmental relations inside the CIS area"' (Jensen, 2001: 10).

The history of the two strategic documents that appeared at the end of the 1990s shows to what extent there were common views on important areas, and where lines of disagreement between the EU and Russia remained. The Medium-Term Strategy demonstrates that Russia saw its relations with the EU as a reasonably important part of its foreign policy goals. It did not set down any hopes of joining the EU, but discussed 'the objective need to establish a multipolar world, common histories of nations and responsibility of Europe states for the future of the continent, and complementarity of their economies. It is also directly coordinated with the concept of economic security of Russia'.[151] The Strategy was 'primarily aimed at insuring national interests and enhancing the role and image of Russia in Europe and the world through establishing the reliable pan-European system of collective security, and at mobilizing the economic potential and managerial experience of the European Union to promote the development of a socially oriented market economy of Russia based on the fair competition principles and further construction of a democratic rule-of law state'. This line of thinking was also seen in the 1997 and 2000 foreign policy and national security documents – the Medium-Term Strategy claimed to be 'a consistent evolution of the general

[151] These and the following quotations taken from the European Commission's translation of the Medium-Term Strategy at: http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/russian_medium_term_strategy/index.htm.

foreign policy concept of Russia in the European area' – and is therefore a very clear expression of the Russian official viewpoint in this area.

Section 1 discussed in detail the strategic character of the Russia-EU partnership. 'As a world power situated on two continents, Russia should retain its freedom to determine and implement its domestic and foreign policies, its status and advantages of a Euro-Asian state and the largest country of the CIS, independence of its position and activities at international organizations. From this point of view, partnership with the EU can manifest itself in joint efforts to establish an effective system of collective security in Europe on the basis of equality without dividing lines, including through the development and implementation of the Charter on European Security'. The Strategy maintained that 'Efforts will continue to be made for further opening of the EU's market to Russian exports, elimination of the remaining discrimination in trade... protection of Russia's legitimate interests... opposing possible attempts to hamper economic integration in the CIS... to the detriment of Russia's interests'. It also suggested that 'the development of partnership with the EU should continue consolidating Russia's role as a leading power in shaping a new system of... political and economic relations in the CIS area', and thus made reference to the touchy subject of Russia's right to dominate the former Soviet space. The general tone of no-nonsense defence of Russian interests was repeatedly made in phrases such as 'Russia asserts its keenness to act in partnership with and support efforts made by the EU in the areas that are important for it where interests of the parties objectively concur'.

Mention was made of NATO, in both a positive and negative manner. In section 1.5 it is asserted that 'the following steps [should] be made in the forthcoming decade: to ensure pan-European security by the Europeans themselves without both isolation of the United States and NATO and their dominance on the continent; to work out Russia's position on the "defence identity" of the European Union with the Western European Union to be included in it... to promote practical cooperation in the area of security (peacemaking, crisis settlement, various aspects of arms limitation and reduction, etc.) which could counterbalance, inter alia, the NATO-centrism in Europe'.

Section 5 dealt with 'Securing the Russian interests in an expanded European Union', and in this regard discussed 'Taking into account the ambivalent impact of the European Union's expansion on the terms of its cooperation with Russia and on Russian interests, to strive for achieving the best advantages of such expansion (lower customs protectionism, civilized transit standards, etc) while preventing, eliminating or setting off possible negative consequences'.

The EU's response to this document was to welcome it, declaring that it highlighted 'the significance both sides attach to a close political and economic partnership and its further development within the framework of the PCA. They are based on common values such as respect of the principles of democracy and human rights, the rule of law and the market economy and share the common objectives of enhancing political stability and economic prosperity in Europe'.

The CIS

Russia made an effort, at least for a few years, to retain its economic interests in the CIS (as well as for geostrategic and geopolitical reasons outlined in Chapter 5). As the Medium-Term Strategy repeatedly asserted, Russia saw its economic rights in this region as an important part of its foreign policy. Russia was not reacting to a military threat from the EU. But, as noted in Chapter 2, a state will be sensitive to efforts by outside parties to undermine its economic influence. Thus Russia might have been expected to aim for closer economic control of the CIS if it felt that the EU was infringing on Russian interests in this area. It might have attempted to establish some kind of economic union to balance against the EU, and in which it would have the trading rights denied it in the West. In fact, as noted in Chapter 5, Russia's commitment to the CIS was uneven and half-hearted in the economic field as well as in security.

Economically, the fall of the Soviet Empire left in place the unique ties that had been formed over 70 years of a centralised command economy. The Central Asian states had become in general terms raw material providers to the Slavic states and providers of a market for the manufactured goods of the Slavs. As these goods were not welcome to consumers in the EU, there was a rationale for maintaining links to the CIS. The key factors were oil and gas. Russia was very keen to prevent Western and other companies obtaining exclusive rights to the

gigantic hydrocarbon supplies of the Caspian basin. Economic pressure was immediately placed on the CIS states to comply with Russia's demands for increased economic cooperation after the shattering of the Union itself.[152]

The links between the republics and Russia were often tighter than those among the republics themselves or even those within individual republics. For example, Kazakhstan, with its northern regions dominated by industry and a Slavic, mainly Russian population, exported some of the oil drilled in the West of the country to refineries in Russia while receiving unrefined oil from the Russian Far East. The economic structure of individual republics had also been designed to slot into a Union system centred on European Russia in terms of goods produced. Uzbekistan, converted into a purely cotton-growing region under the Soviets, was reliant on the market of Russia to sell its cotton. And indeed, it still was in the 1990s. 'All states depend upon Russia for imports of industrial products, consumer goods and food. Russia is also the largest export market, and overall accounts for over half of the trade of each Central Asian state' (Kubicek, 1997: 640). The Caucasian states were in a similar position. For Russia too, the sudden shattering of economic ties, as well as unconstrained printing of the rouble by other CIS states, was seen as exacerbating Russia's economic problems and thus to many required the reassertion of some form of control.

Russia used its economic power to bring the CIS states into line. In early 1994 Moscow cut off Turkmenistan's gas supplies to Europe, which was part of the reason why in February 1996 the 'Russian company Gazprom and the Turkmenistan Ministry of Oil and Gas established Turkmenrosgaz which not only obtained the sole right to prospect for and extract hydrocarbon deposits but has also acquired the right to make agreements with CIS countries for the delivery of Turkmen natural gas' (Bolukbasi, 1998: 407). By the beginning of 1993, 'many CIS states shared with Yeltsin the view that the recession all had experienced enforced the need for economic cooperation, a view consolidated in the Economic Union Treaty signed by nine states' (Sakwa & Webber, 1999: 386).

The 1991 Alma-Ata declaration of the goal of a 'single economic space' appeared promising because of the 'high levels of mutual interdependence' and the

[152] As noted, the EU very quickly came to dominate Russian trade at the expense of the CIS. In 1997 only 21.5% of Russia's total trade turnover was conducted with other CIS states (the equivalent figure in 1990 was 63%).

'objective necessity for cooperation' (Sakwa & Webber, 1999: 386). The first two years of the existence of the CIS, however, illustrated just how weak these factors were when placed against the equally pressing imperatives of asserting national economic sovereignty and giving priority to tackling domestic economic crises. During 1992 'the CIS economic area crumbled as countries moved to the market at different, uncoordinated speeds, [and] severed trade and production links in pursuit of autarchic economic strategies' (Sakwa & Webber, 1999: 386). By 1997 the Economic Union had withered and trade had been subject to continuous decline. No stable common tariff on mutual trade was ever established.[153]

If Russia saw the CIS as some sort of rival or counterweight to the EU, then it was mistaken. Economic union failed owing to mutual lack of interest as all parties sought to increase links abroad where they might be more profitable. Russian enthusiasm for economic union had quickly worn off and been replaced by the simple desire to have a piece of the hydrocarbon pie. The EU did not play a major role in influencing this process.

The military realm

Russia manifested little interest in the EU's efforts to boost its military power independently of NATO. What interest it did show was aimed at increasing EU-Russia cooperation as a way of diminishing NATO's influence. To Russia, establishing a closer security relationship with Western Europe was an important element in stimulating multipolarity in world politics. While the EU or WEU was 'not seen as presenting a security threat to Russia' (Danilov & de Spiegeleire, 1998: 3-4), it did mean that the EU received some attention from Russia for this reason, 'stimulating tendencies to play Western states off against one another. By the end of 1997, Yeltsin was talking openly in European capitals about the need to reduce US influence in "our Europe"' (Donaldson & Nogee, 2000: 248).

When the countries of central and eastern Europe 'including the three Baltic countries, were offered Associate partner status in the WEU in May 1994...

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[153] Examples of intra-regional co-operation did come into being, but many focused on bilateral treaties or small groups of states within the CIS. These include the 1994 agreement between Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan to create a common economic space (in 1995 they created the Interstate Council and a Central Asian Bank of Co-operation). Recent years have also seen the economic treaty between Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan gaining ground.

Kozyrev stated that Russia had no objections to this move' (Danilov & de Spiegeleire, 1998: 6). In October 1995 Kozyrev also wrote a letter to Javier Solana, Chairman-in-Office of the WEU Council of Ministers, saying that 'Russia sees "in the strengthening of contacts with WEU, one of the promising ways of establishing a genuine partnership in European affairs"' (Danilov & de Spiegeleire, 1998: 11). Kozyrev also suggested creating a Russia-WEU Consultative Council and offered to provide Russian satellite intelligence to the WEU... [which was] entirely dependent on US satellite data provided through NATO' (*Moscow Times*, 2 December 1994).

In September 1997, Yeltsin stated that 'he would like to see US involvement in European security issues curbed. He said NATO is the means by which the US exercised its influence on European security. He again expressed his opposition to NATO's eastward expansion, noting that "Russia advocates a multi-polar world"... [and] warned he will stress at the upcoming Council of Europe summit in Strasbourg that Europeans should take responsibility for their own security' (NUPI, 18 September 1997). *Izvestiia* commented (16 November 1999) that the creation of a European army would be 'a good thing' because it would 'create an independent defence structure independent from the US. If it was to be pan-European then Russia could not be ignored'.

Yet apart from comments such as these, no major interest was manifested in Russia. This was partly the consequence of Russia focusing its foreign policy on other aspects of security relations with the West that were considered essential (NATO, the role of the UN and the OSCE chief among them). To some extent it can also be explained by Russia's 'scepticism about the EU's stated intention to become a more independent actor in the European security arena, especially in the area of defense policy... This component of the Western military structure simply was not taken into account by the Russian military planning bodies' (Danilov, 2001: 1).

As surveys have shown, the Cologne European Council meeting made little impression in Russia. 'Even when asked directly in September about what the implications would be for Russia, the foreign policy elite revealed little awareness of the EU's intention to develop a military capacity. No alarm was expressed. Foreign ministry officials directly concerned with the EU were better informed, but

in September 1999 they seemed preoccupied with the consequences of exclusion to Russia's economic security, and relatively unconcerned about more traditional forms of security, particularly in relation to the EU' (Light et al., 2000: 8). However, 'The authors of Russia's Medium-Term Strategy were clearly well-informed on the subject... [yet] took a positive view of the prospect of the CFSP acquiring a defence aspect.' The preamble to the Medium-Term strategy, as noted above, maintains that a 'strategic partnership' between Russia and the EU can achieve a 'pan-European system of collective security based on "equality without dividing lines"'... The Medium-Term Strategy also calls, in section 1.5.2, for practical cooperation with the WEU in the area of security "which could counterbalance... the NATO-ism in Europe". In other words, a military aspect to the CFSP was perceived to offer an alternative European security structure, which would diminish NATO's importance in Europe' (Light et al., 2000: 8-9).

It was only in December 1999, at the Helsinki European Council, after delicate negotiations with Washington, that the EU decided to upgrade the Union's military capability by means of the Common European Security and Defence Policy (CESDP). It aimed 'to provide the European union with the civilian and military capabilities necessary for the conduct of a wide range of humanitarian, peace-keeping and peace-enforcement operations... open to the participation of like-minded partners of the EU (international organisations, non-EU NATO members and EU candidate countries, as well as key partners like Russia)' (European Commission's Delegation to Russia, 2004). Helsinki established the 'headline goal' that the EU would have the capacity to deploy, within 60 days, and sustain for at least one year, a force of up to 60,000 personnel, the European rapid reaction capability (to be established by 2003).

The ESDP did seem to offer 'the hope of a counter to "NATO-centrism" and participation was seen as a way of obtaining a voice in EU structures and even of transforming it into a sort of semi-formal pan-European security arrangement' (Kalland, 2004: 7). But the Russians 'were deceiving themselves in thinking that the Western system was a kind of balance in which "increasing the 'European' weight would automatically weaken the American side of the balance". In fact, increasing the European weight was only possible because it would not undermine the Transatlantic link' (Light et al. 2000: 9). It was soon to become clear that the

EU did not intend the CESDP to be an addition to NATO. Javier Solana, for example, was appointed EU High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy (Danilov, 2001: 5). Officially, the line was that 'The success of crisis management, which will comply with the United Nations Charter, depends on the collaboration with... NATO, since the EU will have to use NATO resources, including military capabilities, operation planning capabilities and so on' (European Union, 2002b). Thus Russia's hopes of using the EU's developing military potential as a means of weakening NATO were, at least in the 1990s, ill-founded.

Kaliningrad: symbol of Russia-EU relations

The Kaliningrad exclave became an important issue in Russia-EU relations once it became clear that the EU's expansion, set for early in the 21st century, would mean that this part of the Russian Federation would be completely surrounded by EU states. The issue became a thorny one. Official Russian reaction to the situation in Kaliningrad came in the Medium-term Strategy, where 'Kaliningrad is mentioned as a test-case for future cooperation with the EU. Yet the fear of potential Kaliningrad separatism, which could result from the oblast's closer relationship with the EU, is still strong in Moscow, and prevents the central government from implementing bolder initiatives' (Sergounin, 2000: 6).

The Strategy states that 'In contacts with the EU [Russia will] pay special attention to securing protection, including under the international law, of the interests of the Kaliningrad region as an entity of the Russian Federation and of the territorial integrity of Russia'. Section 6.6 suggests that the two sides need to 'continue developing the pan-European transport corridors, first of all corridor No. 1 (in particular, its laterals to Riga- Kaliningrad- Gdansk)... To try to ensure that these and other infrastructure projects are funded by the European Investment Bank'. Section 8.3 devotes itself specifically to Kaliningrad: 'Given [the] special geographical and economic situation of the Kaliningrad region, to create the necessary external conditions for its functioning and development as an integral part of the Russian Federation and an active participant in the transboundary and interregional co-operation... To pursue a line to the conclusion, if appropriate, of a special agreement with the EU in safeguarding the interests of the Kaliningrad

region as an entity of the Russian Federation in the process of the EU expansion as well as to its transformation into a Russian pilot region within the framework of the Euro-Russian cooperation in the 21st century.' The language of the Medium-Term Strategy is therefore positive with regards to the Kaliningrad issue: the suggestion is that there would be little problem in securing the interests of Russia in this area with the agreement of the Union.

Kaliningrad is a perfect example of how, by the end of the decade, Russia-EU relations had developed. Russia saw the EU in positive terms, even though, by 1999, the potential pitfalls in the relationship were evident. Such pitfalls were dealt with in a practical manner. The Russia-EU relationship in general developed along lines that roughly fit the realist analysis. Despite the fact that realism is not explicit in its predictions of the influence of economics on foreign policy, Russia's policy towards the EU could be seen as a form of economic bandwagoning. The Russian leadership gradually increased its focus on the EU as it became clear that without close economic ties with the EU the Russian economy would never be rebuilt. Unlike NATO, however, and owing to its military weakness, the EU was never perceived as a threat, was never seen as part of the imbalance of power, and hence was relegated to a lower position on the list of priorities.

CHAPTER 7
THE SEARCH FOR THE RUSSIAN IDEA AND POST-SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 used the realist framework to attempt an explanation of the research questions. The following three chapters do so using the constructivist framework outlined in Chapter 3.

National identity has a powerful influence on foreign policy because it frames the way foreign policy-makers see the world and what they regard as the required foreign policy. It forms the basis for what are considered to be national interests. Although it is constantly in a state of reproduction and evolution, and there can never be a homogeneous vision of the national identity, there are always stable aspects to it – it is made up of a relatively stable set of shared understandings on the subject of 'us' and 'them'. Moreover, some members of society have more influence over national identity than others: the cultural and policy-making elite, who promote a favoured interpretation of that identity over others.

In the Russia of 1991 many of the issues relating to national identity were more contested than is often the case in settled societies. With the sudden change in the international and domestic situation, and the lack of stable institutions of authority, these issues were subject to a great deal of conflict.

Russian national identity in the post-Cold War world – resurrecting the past

The end of the Soviet Union: raising crucial issues of identity

On 31 December 1991 Russia lost its position as the heartland of a huge system controlled from Moscow – the Soviet Union plus, to a lesser but nevertheless important degree, the Warsaw Treaty Organisation states.[154] This rupture left 25

[154] Sometimes called the 'inner' and 'outer' empires.

million or so Russians[155] living outside the new country's borders. However, a 'fundamental ambiguity over the definition and status of Russians abroad... reflects ambiguity over the identity of Russia itself' (Sakwa, 1996: 36). Russians living outside the Federation's borders were quickly to become a *cause célèbre* for those lamenting the loss of Russia's prestige and status in the world. 'The largest European nation, with a long record of imperial domination, suddenly became a divided people with vulnerable peripheral groups. It is only natural that such a historical development would be extremely painful for Russian national identity' (Rudensky, 1994: 58). The borders themselves were seen by many as artificial.[156] They were also glaring evidence of Russia's fall from grace as the centre of a vast empire and core of one of the world's superpower states. Russians often referred to the former Soviet Union as the 'near abroad', thus marking the area out as a separate arena for foreign policy from the rest of the world. The Soviet empire had been destroyed and Russia found itself facing its future with the dimensions of the pre-Romanov state.

Very quickly, matters of borders and irredentism 'rose to the top of the national interest debate' (Tuminez, 1996: 57). Russia's borders required urgent clarification, because despite the fact that 'borders are superficial by definition... for a post-imperial country such as Russia, the issue of borders is intimately linked to the nature of the political regime, the structure of the state, and the pattern of foreign relations' (Trenin, 2001: 28). Russia had lost the 'landmarks that helped the nation to find its way' (Rubanov, 1999: 72). The result was 'a picture of a deep identity crisis, a crisis of the nation, its spirit and self-consciousness' (Lebedenko, 2004: 72).[157]

While in many former Soviet republics nationalism had become a powerful force and had been one of the catalysts for the very destruction of the Soviet

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[155] The usual number given is 25 million; see for example, figures given in *Kommersant* (31 March 1993) for each former Soviet republic, which add up to just over 25 million; also de Tinguy (2004: 365). See also Szporluk (1994:12), and Luzhkov (*Argumenti i Fakti*, No. 11, March 1993). Roshchin (*Komsomolskaia Pravda,* 4 February 1993) used the number 29 million. According to Goskomstat figures (cited in de Tunguy [2004: 370]), the total immigration to the Russian Federation from former Soviet republics totalled 4.8 million between 1990 and 2002.

[156] Notably Crimea, 'given' to Ukraine by Khrushchev. In July 1993 the Russian Supreme Soviet passed a resolution calling for a reassertion of Russian control over Sevastopol and overturning the deal struck between Yeltsin and Kravchuk to divide the Black Sea Fleet (Kortunov, 2004: paragraph 69).

[157] Acting Deputy Director, Department for Cultural Relations and UNESCO Affairs in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

system, in Russia it was weak and lacking coherence.[158] There was a clear desire by the state and all political groups to find a new and powerful 'idea' for Russia that could unite and motivate the nation in the face of its troubles (Thibault & Levesque, 1997).[159] Yet even by 1994 *Izvestiia* was still claiming that, '"the Russian question – that is the most important problem of Moscow diplomacy in the new year".[160] Communism had been overthrown, but in the difficult circumstances in which the Russian nation found itself in 1992, it was a complicated and difficult process to build a positive national alternative (Szporluk, 1994: 8-9). Russia had to build a national identity rather than a Soviet or Tsarist empire, and this proved a painful task. Russia's sense of national identity, for historical reasons, was 'weak before the creation of the Soviet Union and tightly bound with the Soviet vision. [It became] even less clear after the Soviet collapse' (Ponarin, 1999: 1).

In July 1996, after his victory in the presidential elections, Yeltsin 'gathered his top campaign aides: '"in Russia's history in the twentieth century" he told them "there have been various periods – monarchism, totalitarianism, *perestroika*, and, finally, the democratic path of development. Each epoch had its own ideology. [But] now we don't have one. And that's bad." Accordingly, they were instructed to "give Russia an idea"' (Urban, 1998: 969), and he created a commission to find a national idea. In the end, 'the commission... quietly dropped its original intention of drawing up a preliminary sketch for public discussion and [instead decided on]... a long-term research project, according to which it would catalogue and evaluate the national ideas put forward by democrats and centrists, communists and patriots' (Urban, 1998: 983). *Rossiiskaia Gazeta* (the government's official daily newspaper[161]) launched a nationwide appeal for ideas on the theme.

The feeling was sometimes expressed that the very existence of the nation was at stake. The question of national identity assumed the form of an urgent need to discover what Russia was, where its borders should be, who were the Russian people. These questions were never entirely settled (and never can be) but a version acceptable to many in the Russian elite had been found by the mid-1990s.

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[158] See Prizel (1998: 177) and Dunlop (2000: 2).
[159] See also Prizel (1998), Williams & Neumann (2000: 364), Eggert (2002).
[160] Cited in Szporluk (1994: 12).
[161] RFE/RL *Russian Media Empires III*, 1998.

The elite and guardianship of national identity in Yeltsin's Russia

Defining the national interest and ensuring a successful foreign policy is considered by members of the nation and outsiders to be the business of officials within the structures of the state. As well as the state foreign policy elite, the wider cultural elite of journalists, academics and religious figures is influential because it adopts and is accorded the authority to expound upon issues of national significance, although the ideas propounded by the elite must have wider resonance to be successful. Owing to the struggle in Russia over the constitution and particularly in the situation of *dvoevlastie* (dual power) before the showdown of 1993 there was a great deal of confusion and competition among members of official power structures.[162]

The early Yeltsin period built on and wrestled with structures and personnel inherited from the Soviet period (the elite dominating the new state was made up of many of the same people who had dominated the old Soviet state, raising questions as to the depth of the revolution); many of the political battles of the time were fought to establish which of them had authority, against the backdrop of the launch of 'shock therapy' and severe political conflict. Severe struggles for power took place, even after the 1993 conflict and its resolution in favour of the presidency. The President and his administration, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Defence, economic and atomic agencies, the regions, the Security Council, the Defence Council, the Council of Ministers, powerful economic interests and parliament, all vied for power in the new Russia. After the 1993 political conflict, Yeltsin was able to gather more power into the central bodies of his regime and rationalise to some extent foreign policy-making. In terms of state-building, the decade might be characterised as demonstrating an uneven drift towards centralisation of power in the president's hands (see Chapter 4 for details).[163]

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[162] At the end of 1993 the conflict between President and Parliament came to a head with the siege and consequent violence around Moscow, culminating in the shelling of the White House and surrender of those inside. Crucial to this victory for Yeltsin was the support of the army. The violence was followed by a referendum on a new constitution and later by elections to the new Federation Council as prescribed in the constitution. One notable aspect of politics in Russia after this point was Yeltsin's increased power if not authority as president, and the achievement of consensus in foreign policy, which was achieved notably by a change in the line being propagated by the foreign policy elite.

[163] Parkhalina (interviewed by the author in Moscow, 12 July 2002) argued that it would take a generational change to bring about a change in Russian perceptions of the West and hence foreign

At the same time, the sudden freedom experienced by the media, the discrediting of Soviet ideology and democratic elections led to a burst of argument in which many voices fought to be heard. Leading journals and newspapers were also important mouthpieces for elite interests and others to disseminate their views.[164]

The Russian idea: historical roots

The familiarity of the debates in the 1990s shows how Russians have looked both consciously and unconsciously to the past to understand their present. The elite discourse which developed in the Yeltsin period very clearly reflected Russian thought of the previous two centuries, showing the importance of interpretation of the past in understanding the present;[165] and in influencing what those in the present saw as guidelines for rebuilding the Russian nation.

The 19th century thinkers who established ideas such as Slavophilism and Westernism were of course themselves drawing on a more distant past, but it was here that the origins of the modern debate were to be found. Many of the debates originating with 19th century liberals, socialists, nationalists and statists, were very much alive in the 1990s, as shown by the popularity of reprinted works by thinkers such as Solovev and Danilevskii, and political arguments along Westerniser–Slavophile lines.[166]

After centuries of development, sometimes consciously seeking to imitate Western systems of government, economic production and war-making, sometimes retreating into isolation – of glories and disasters, modernisation and stagnation – Russia, in the 19th century, had come to be accepted as a European Great Power.

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policy. Attitudes to the West were ingrained in the diplomatic corps in the 1990s as a result of their Soviet education.

[164] A controlling stake in the daily newspaper *Izvestiia,* for example, was held by the 'oligarch' Vladimir Potanin's Oneximbank. A controlling stake of the newspaper *Nezavisimaia Gazeta* was held by Boris Berezovskii's LogoVAZ Industrial-Financial Group through its subsidiary Obedinionny bank (details from *Russian Media Empires*, May 1998). The journal *International Affairs,* with the current Foreign Minister as chief editor, and various other members of the Foreign Ministry and other high-ranking civil servants and academics on the editorial board, was a mouthpiece for the diplomatic elite.

[165] In Russia, this looking to the past is a very obvious part of the national culture. Like the Poles, for Russians 'It is a long-established tradition… [to] debate and assess contemporary problems through the prism of their recurrent historical… dilemmas' (Sanford, 1999: 1).

[166] Danilevskii's 'Russia and Europe' was republished for example, and the contemporary work 'Why Russia is not America' (by Andrei Parshin) became a bestseller. 'One gets the impression that Russia entered the 21st century from the 20th and through the 19th centuries' (Trenin, 2004: 11).

This was largely a result of the defeat of Napoleon and the entry of Russian troops into Paris as part of the victorious alliance.[167] Russia continued its expansion southwards too, in the 19th century, conquering territories in Central Asia and the Caucasus. These exploits were recorded by Pushkin, Lermontov and Tolstoi (of whom only the last was critical of Russian imperialism). But the abortive invasion by Napoleon's Grande Armee was the latest manifestation of Russia's troubled relations with Europe.[168]

The 19th century was also the century of nationalism, when industrialisation and modernisation led to the development of national consciousness in European countries through the broadening of electoral politics, urbanisation and increasing literacy.[169] Russia's development was different. The state, as distinct from the nation, enforced top-down versions of an official state national ideology on a variety of peoples, few of whom developed any kind of Russian national consciousness. The Russian state evolved as an 'empire-state' rather than a 'nation-state'. As a result of 'Russia's relentless expansion... permanently blurring the distinction between Russia proper and its periphery... nationalism was a manipulated state ideology' (Prizel, 1998: 165).[170] The ruling elite were distinct from the mass of its subjects who did not experience any sort of national awakening. According to Ramazan Abdulatipov,[171] this 'suggests to us where to start rebuilding Russia: to take into account the special role of Russian statehood in the development of our society. An explanation must be sought first of all in Russia's historically multinational nature and the openness of its geopolitical space to both the West and the East... it must be taken into account that Russia was developed and formed historically as a multinational and multicultural state'.

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[167] Particularly after the defeat of Napoleon in the early nineteenth century, it 'became a full member of, and a leading power in, the European "concert." At the same time, Russia's active European policy in no way prevented it from establishing versatile contacts with China, Japan, the United States, and countries in South America, all of which were not key actors in the world arena at that point in history. Actually, that period spawned the idea of a multidirectional foreign policy that has now become one of the most fundamental principles underlying contemporary Russian foreign policy' (Ivanov, 2001).

[168] This period also led to a change in Western perceptions of Russia, with Russia being accorded the status of serious and reasonably civilised European player.

[169] See Gellner (1983), Anderson (1983), Smith (1986) on the place of a pre-existing (or imagined) national consciousness in this process.

[170] See also Tolz (1998: 995), Lieven (1998: 261), Zevelev (2002a: 12).

[171] Chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet's Council of Nationalities, cited in *Russia and Eurasia Documents*, 1993: 212.

The state expanded through warfare and treaty, and its identity was partly a result of this expansion. The lands taken were home to Muslims, the mountain peoples of the Caucasus, the orthodox Christians of Georgia and Armenia, and the Turkic peoples of Central Asia.[172] Many of these had collaborated with the Slavs in throwing off the 'Mongol yoke'. Such a development also assisted in the creation of the 'empire-state', and is part of the reason for the popularity of the idea that the Russian state is a 'civilisation' rather than a nation, and was the birth of the messianic aspect of the Russian idea (Berdiaev, 1947, 8-9).[173] The *Rossiane* lived in a confusion of lands, mingling with each other. This mixing was particularly the case in the Ukraine and Belarus. Elsewhere, the populations often lived apart. In the Soviet period, local elites would assume the top positions in republics, ready to take over in the wave of elite-led nationalism of the late 1980s and early 1990s.

As an empire, whether Tsarist or Communist, the core ethnos of the *Rus* was subsumed by the state. This gave rise to a supranational identity which manifested itself in loyalty to the Tsarist or Soviet state. Thus the phenomenon of 'statism' in Russia can easily be allied to the nationalism of empire building or resuscitation of the USSR; the concepts of Russia and the empire or Union were often confused. Nevertheless, both in Tsarist and Soviet times, a certain purely Russian nationalism existed.

The state elite (along with Russian intellectuals) was always confused, however, about the correct mix of political, ethnic and religious forms with which to brew its official nationalism. The Orthodox religion, for example, was often perceived as superior to Western Catholicism and Protestantism and Moscow was referred to as the Third Rome, even though Church and state had very different ideas about the Church's relationship to the state, and hence the legitimacy of both (Yevgeneva, 1999: 74). Nationalists in the 19th century often evoked the traditions of Russian antiquity in music, art and literature.

Slavophiles and Westernisers

Two major themes in Russian national life that continued into the 1990s reflected the fact that the West became the most significant external factor in Russian

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[172] What is now Tajikistan also includes people of Persian descent.
[173] See Lieven (1998: 375) and Parkhalina (2002: 4).

cultural life over the course of the 19th century,[174] because both philosophical traditions are defined in relation to the West. Naturally, the divisions between the two philosophies were not always clear. In many ways they were a reflection of each other, both concerned with Russia's relationship to the West.[175]

The Slavophiles 'maintained that there are three principles of Russia: Orthodoxy, autocracy and the sentiment of nationhood. But they understood these things in a sense which was different from the official ideology of the government in which Orthodoxy and the sense of nationhood were in subjection to autocracy. In their classification Orthodoxy occupied the first place' (Berdiaev, 1947: 51). Slavophiles promoted the unity and uniqueness of the Slavic peoples and included a rejection of the values of the West. Westernisers, on the other hand, felt that Russia should emulate Western political and social forms, and that this would ensure a moral, prosperous and civilised future.

Both Westernizing and Slavophile views understood the Ukraine and Belorussia as integral parts of Russia or at least as being so close for it to be unthinkable that they should exist as separate states (Prizel, 1998: 161). However, the union of these western slavs with Great Russia 'in the seventeenth-eighteenth centuries ... contributed to the westernisation of Russia from within, as it were, since they became internal elements of the Russian body national. Conversely, the departure of Ukraine and Belarus makes the post-1991 Russia feel less 'European' than it was before' (Szporluk, 1994: 9).

20th century developments

During the Soviet period, the Eurasianists (a group of thinkers exiled in the West), argued that the Russian state was a unique form of civilisation unknown in either West or East. The movement was antagonistic towards westernising tendencies in Russia, because Europeanisation would destroy Russia; it would result in the ruling

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[174] The West signified for Russians Western Europe, later to include the USA once that country came to play an important part in world affairs. As before, the concept of the West contained negative and positive connotations for many, which complicated the overall Westerniser-Slavophile divide.

[175] For Berdiaev, the matter was slightly different: for him, the key to understanding Russia lies in the fact that 'within the Russian soul two principles are always engaged in strife – the Eastern and the Western' (Berdiaev, 1947: 2-3). Echoing this idea today, in considering the phrase 'Russian nationality', Komarov (2001: 5) asks, 'what associations does [the word *Rus*]... evoke in someone who hears it? Expanse or lack of control? Freedom or anarchy? Freedom from what? Equality of whom or what?'

elite becoming Europeanised while 'the rest of the people will be demoralised and self-loathing'.[176]

In the Soviet Union, meanwhile, Marxism-Leninism was the only publicly acceptable viewpoint. The official view did not suggest that a nation's identity was important, yet Russian uniqueness was sometimes included in official ideology (Diligensky, 1991: 11) in an inconsistent manner. The Orthodox Church was even drafted in when it seemed as if the Wehrmacht would live up to Hitler's boasts, and nationalism was sought as a tool to provide fighting spirit. This shows that a sense of Russian nationalism existed and was founded on an ethnic, religious and territorial base.

Even earlier, however, the Bolsheviks had attempted to use nationalism to bolster their legitimacy though it 'would be wrong... to claim that Stalin "accepted National Bolshevism as a political programme and put it into practice"' (Duncan, 1998: 60). In the Soviet period, from time to time, official ideologists incorporated the messianic mentality, panhumanism, communitarianism, statism and anti-Westernism of Tsarist Romantic nationalists in a particularly Russian communism. 'To the extent that Russian Marxism was more Russian than Marxist, the intellectual legacy of the Russian idea was largely responsible' (Scanlan, 1996: 38). Under the Soviets there was an attempt to create an overarching Soviet national identity that would coexist with the individual nationalities. What was consistent throughout the Soviet period was the anti-Western animus of the state and official ideology. The West was, by its capitalist nature, aggressively antagonistic towards the USSR and its allies.

The official ideology could not prevent other beliefs from existing, even if only in limited circles, through underground and informal means, such as samizdat. The expert institutes, such as the Institute of American and Canadian Studies (ISKRAN) and the Institute of World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO), which were connected to, and controlled by, the state (Tsigankov, 2002: 11), could make limited contact with outside ideas and develop heretical views in their own close circles.

Among dissidents who managed to circulate their ideas were included Slavophiles, who believed that Bolshevism had turned Russia away from its true

[176] Prince Nikolai Trubetskoi, cited in Neumann (1996: 112-113).

path (among other evils). More recently, Solzhenitsyn, one of these Slavophiles, suggested again that Russia should isolate itself in order to concentrate on reviving its unique heritage (Solzhenitsyn, 1995).[177] In this view, it is by looking inward that Russia would rediscover its true character. Other dissidents, with Sakharov at their head, were of the liberal or Westernising tendency and advocated a form of Western liberal democracy, becoming standard-bearers for the Democrats in the late Soviet period.

In the Soviet Union of *Perestroika,* Russian nationalism was reborn as a public force with the emergence of the *neformali* (informal public associations not connected to the CPSU). The first public organisation to be registered, in fact, was *pamiat*, dedicated to the restoration of public monuments, which soon became dominated by extreme nationalists. Other groups, including the Communist Party and the military were still concerned to maintain the USSR, and attacked Gorbachev for letting things slip: they were still 'Soviet' patriots, but they saw they had with the nationalists a common enemy and often adopted nationalist clothing.[178] This enemy was the liberal, democratising government of the young reformers. The red-brown alliance was born with this new coalition of ideas. The Gorbachev period thus allowed the re-emergence of Russian nationalism as a public force, not to mention among the other Union republics: and it was perhaps the prime factor in the collapse of the USSR.

The Russian idea and the west in the 1990s

During the 1990s, the above themes recurred in national debates and often defined the political programmes espoused by individuals and groups. The particular brew of national identity they put forward also defined their views on foreign policy; for those in power it strongly influenced the way they carried out foreign policy. The

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[177] See also Guroff & Guroff (1994: 79).

[178] Gorbachev's conservative Second Secretary, Ligachev, for example, attempted to 'play the Russian card' in an attempt to slow or halt the reforms. He did this by appealing to the so-called village prose writers, like Rasputin, and other elements of the conservative intelligentsia, and thus to potential supporters (mainly at that time within the Party) who sympathised with their views. The democrats also used nationalism to further their goals. Yeltsin suggested that Russian nationalism was democratic, struggling against the unitary, CPSU dictatorship.

multitude of political parties, 'blocs' and factions in Russia in the 1990s can be broken down into three categories. First, those who saw the need for Russia to become a 'normal' state, a democracy in its current borders that had close and cooperative relations with the West, particularly the USA (Westernisers, often called Atlanticists in the 1990s). A second group demanded the restoration of the Soviet empire or the Russian empire and propounded many Slavophile and Eurasianist ideas; they were highly antagonistic to the West. In their view Russia's identity required it to be the core of a multinational empire, which by its nature was inconsistent with and superior to the values of the West. The third group believed that Russia should instead focus on rebuilding its power regionally and globally without reincorporating the former empire (statists or pragmatic nationalists). The last exalted the strong state (whether Tsarist, Communist or both); they advocated 'realistic' relations with the West, not precluding cooperation as long as it was in Russia's interests.[179] They 'favoured the consolidation of democracy... and did not want a return to past economic and political practices. However, they also adopted a modified version of the nationalism of the Fundamentalist Nationalists into their ideas' (Light, 2004: 45).

The early period: Atlanticists in control

After achieving his personal victory over the coup plotters, and becoming leader of independent Russia in December 1991,[180] Yeltsin obtained the freedom to act in pushing through the shock-therapy programme. Parliament granted him the right to

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[179] These classifications have been adapted from Light et al (1996), Parkhalina (2002), Zevelev (2002a) and Tolz (1998). According to Parkhalina, 'these positions can be attributed respectively to the views of liberal reformers, national conservatives, and moderate nationalist centrists... The three groupings advocated, in the foreign policy field, first, 'moving closer to the West and Europe, the second urges renouncing strong links with the West in favor of the so-called Eastern alternative, the third supports a balance between East and West' (Parkhalina, 2002: 2). Light et al. (1996) called the three groups Liberal Westernizers, Pragmatic Nationalists and Fundamentalist Nationalists. Zevelev (2002a: 22), on the other hand, suggests that 'there are five major perspectives, or projects, on building the state and nation as well as corresponding visions of international security in contemporary Russia. They are: new state-building, ethnonationalism, restorationalism, hegemony/dominance, and integrationalism'. Tolz (1998: 995-996) based her breakdown of nationalist groups on whether they advocated: 1) a union identity, with the Russians defined as an imperial people or through their mission to create a supranational state; 2) the Russians as a state of all Eastern Slavs, united by common origin and culture; 3) the Russians as a community of Russian speakers, regardless of their ethnic origin; 4) the Russians defined racially, i.e. blood ties constitute the basis of common identity; 5) a civic Russian (*rossiiskaia*) nation.

[180] He had been chairman of the Russian Supreme Soviet since June 1990; Russian President since June 1991.

rule by decree, which later became a major bone of contention between president and opposition. The appointment of Kozyrev as Foreign Minister, was, like that of Gaidar as acting Prime Minister (with overall control of economic reform), to have far-reaching consequences.

With Kozyrev and Gaidar, figureheads had been found for the new Russian state, in which liberal democracy at home on the Western model was inextricably linked to solidarity with Western Europe and the USA abroad. The latter represented 'civilisation' and 'normality'. Liberty and the future prosperity of Russia were tied together in a commitment to democracy, the rule of law and the free market. The liberal-democratic vision for Russia was a state which was the current size of the Russian Federation and with a liberal citizenship policy.[181] Although some liberals apparently also viewed the Slavic core of the Union as indivisible (a liberal form of Slavophilism), many accepted the borders inherited from Soviet times. Their nationalism was not based on ethnicity, but civic values (Tolz, 1998: 1008), they preferred free market capitalism, and their foreign policy flowed to some extent from this.[182] As Kozyrev noted in his speech to the United Nations in September 1992: 'Development... will not be achieved or ensured in full measure, like political and economic rights and freedoms, unless the creative potential of the individual can be unshackled in a free market environment'. The West was rich, capitalist, democratic – a haven of individual liberty – and something to which Russia should aspire.

The 'Atlanticist' foreign policy required Russia to become a 'normal' state enjoying close relations with the West, whereby 'the democratic revolution in our country and its reintegration into the mainstream of human development will radically change international politics' (Kozyrev, 1992: 287). In a perfect example of how the Atlanticists saw their role in the new world order, Kozyrev stated that

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[181] In February 1992, Russia adopted a nationalities policy in which all those who at that time 'were in permanent residence on the republic's territory' were acknowledged as Russian citizens, 'as legal successor to the USSR, Russia gives all citizens of the former Union the right to take Russian citizenship for three years' (Abdulakh Mikitaev, interviewed in *Rossiiskaia Gazeta*, 19 January 1993). Although Mikitaev reported problems in processing claims as a result of the delay – symbolic perhaps – in adopting a new coat of arms for the Russian Federation.

[182] Later, liberals, could switch to support of more nationalistic policies as being more in tune with the defence of the individual rights of Russian-speakers in the former Soviet Union. And democrats could come to advocate a more social-oriented market as long as the institutions of democracy were maintained. Such strains were to be emphasised by their failure to secure a successful vision of the national idea.

'we suggested that the already existing practice of submitting drafts of Russian laws for expert assessment become a standard procedure' (Kozyrev, 1992: 290).[183] The Atlanticist programme continued the longstanding westernising tradition of those who suggest that there is nothing specific or unique about the Russians and that Russia's best hope is to discard its historical traditions (Prizel, 1998: 224).[184,185] In the immediate post-Soviet environment, then, 'the term "Russian" was defined in opposition to the term "Soviet". Russia was also defined as a nation in transition to democracy, a prodigal son coming back to the family of Western nations. This anti-Soviet, pro-Western and democratic ideal was symbolized by [Kozyrev]' (Ponarin, 1999: 2). *Izvestiia* was suggesting early in 1992 that 'The West is the new Russia's natural ally' (16 January 1992).

Western countries, and particularly the USA, were regarded by the young reformers in an extremely positive light. There were high hopes in these circles for future close relations. With the signing of the SALT II treaty, for example, 'one can confidently say, that 2-3 January 1993 will remain historic days, printed in history as days when the two largest nuclear powers took a decisive step towards a safer world' (*Izvestiia,* 20 December 1992). In February 1992 Bush and Yeltsin met at Camp David and produced the Camp David Declaration on 'Principles of New Mutual Relations', as reported in the Russian media.[186] The presidents declared that Russia and the United States do not regard one another as potential adversaries. Henceforth, the distinguishing feature of their relations shall be friendship and partnership based on mutual trust, respect, and a common commitment to democracy and economic freedom... We will make all necessary efforts to disseminate our common values and the ideals of democracy, the supremacy of law, the observance of human rights, including the rights of ethnic minorities, the respect of state borders, and peaceful changes in the world.'

Yeltsin at this stage was playing the role of democratic hero and global statesman bringing Russia back to what was seen as its rightful place at the table of

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[183] Kozyrev was reporting his own speech at the 48th session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, 12 February 1992.
[184] In Baranovsky's classification, it was part of the tradition of seeing Russia as lagging behind, but definitely a part of, Europe.
[185] This view corresponds to the 'liberal reformers' in Parkhalina (2002), 'liberal westernizers' in Light et al. (1996), and 'new state-builders' in Zevelev (2002a).
[186] For example, *Rossiiskaia Gazeta*, 3 February 1992.

civilised great powers. But he also conjured a vision of Russia playing a full part in civilising the world in partnership with the USA in this heroic task. Thus he expressed the hope in January 1992 that 'for the first time in history, there is a real opportunity at last to put an end to despotism and dismantle the totalitarian order, in whatever form it may exist'.[187] Kozyrev's speech to the 47th session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York (22 September 1992) contained references to 'Russia's special interest and responsibility for establishing civilized principles of the United Nations and the CSCE'. Thus (at least in 1992) Kozyrev, like Yeltsin, clearly saw his role as bringing Russia into a pre-existing realm of civilised states, and as a bearer of civilisation to other (non-Western) areas of the world.

For the reformers in government in 1991-1992, therefore, in an echo of traditional Westernising arguments, the ideal reality (as Berdiaev [1947: 29] put it) was a 'normal' Western-style state. This idea never entirely died out, and the pragmatic realism that came to dominate foreign policy thinking among the elite in the middle of the decade retained aspects of this way of thinking. However, the 'ideal realities' of those dedicated to overthrowing Yeltsin's regime often included the Soviet or Tsarist periods, and only rarely something original. Members of Yeltsin's regime were accused of selling out to the West, or of acting as agents for a West whose aim was to destroy Russia. It had quickly become clear that in the Russian national identity debate the West was assuming its traditional position as Russia's most important other, whether positive or negative. Indeed, different aspects of the West had often been seen as good and bad, and the West was therefore not always seen as homogeneous. This became very noticeable in the 1990s as Russians compared Europe with the USA.

The nationalist groups and their ideas

Of the members of the opposition which grew quickly and ferociously in opposition to Yeltsin and the young reformers during 1992, many were nationalists. Despite fragmentation among the nationalists, they found common ground on the ideas and policies they opposed: liberalism, democracy, the West and cooperation with the West, and the Yeltsin administration which espoused such policies. They

[187] Speech at a session of the UN Security Council, 21 January 1992.

proposed a stronger defence of 'Russian national interests' in foreign policy. of the integrity of the Russian state, and of Russians living outside the state. Some proposed restoring the Soviet Union/Russian Empire, others adapted their ambitions to ensuring a 'strong state' on the existing territory. These "derzhavniki" ("great power-ists" such as Primakov and Luzhkov) with a view of the Russian state in civic nationalist terms were still very assertive about Russian national interests but aimed to see Russia 'integrated within a world community ruled by international laws' (Ponarin, 1999: 4). Nationalists 'tended to idealise pre-revolutionary Russia' (Prizel, 1998: 231) and rejected the Western model as devoid of morality and spirituality, as had their forebears in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Nationalists commonly referred to 'Mother Russia',[188] an image familiar to anyone who had read Russian literature of the 19th century, evoking a suffering maternal figure. This concept had become something of a cult when the 'Church appropriated the pagan cult of Rozhanitsa, the goddess of fertility... In its oldest peasant form, the Russian religion was a religion of the soil' (Figes, 2002: 321). By constant repetition of this theme, it became easy to portray Yeltsin and his liberal advisers as inhuman and cruel, rather than simply representatives of an alternative political viewpoint. This line of thinking became increasingly common, when nationalists muse on the damage done to the country by Yeltsin and his 'criminal' (liberal) supporters.[189]

Restorationists and statists

The restorationists[190] wanted to rebuild the Soviet or Russian empires. These ideas were popular in military circles. *Nezavisimaia Gazeta* reported in February 1992, for example, that 71% of army officers favoured restoring the USSR.[191] They were sometimes nationalist in an ethnic sense, seeing Russians as naturally dominant in

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[188] See for example Batyuk (1999).

[189] The first Russian nationalist sentiments to emerge in the perestroika period were related to the environment, aimed at preventing the diversion of Russian rivers into Central Asia.

[190] Corresponding to Parkhalina's (2002) national conservatives, Light et al.'s (1996) 'fundamentalist nationalists' and Zevelev's (2002a) ethnonationalists, restorationalists, hegemonists, and integrationalists.

[191] The study was carried out by personnel from the Moscow branch of the All-Union Centre for the Study of Public Opinion on Social and Economic Questions and members of the Association of Military Sociologists, polling participants in the All-Officers Assembly, 17 January 1992. Around 5,000 officers and generals from all branches and categories of troops and from all regions of the country took part, of whom 1,489 completed questionnaires (article cited in *Russia and Eurasia Documents Annual 1992: the Russian Federation*).

the areas previously under the control of Soviet or Russian empires. Racial nationalism was often neo-fascist in its views. Aleksander Barkashov, leader of the Russian National Unity Party, stated that he and his colleagues 'give pride of place to the nation.' He added that 'I call this national-socialism. We differ from German Nazis in that we do not divide nations into superior and inferior ones. We consider the national-socialists of any nation to be our natural allies.'[192]

One of the most prominent politicians of the 1990s, Vladimir Zhirinovskii, led the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia on a platform exhibiting 'a curious amalgam of nationalist, non-nationalist and even anti-nationalist ideas'. But Zhirinovskii appealed to Russian nationalist sentiments with vague promises of conquest and the destruction of enemies; he used crude racism in his speeches and particularly in the West he was seen as an 'ultranationalist'. The party – in practice a very loose conglomeration – gained electoral success in the 1993 parliamentary elections, winning 64 seats, and then 51 seats in 1995.

Aleksandr Rutskoi, as Vice-President until October 1993, was a highly prominent statist.[193] He wrote in January 1992 (while Vice-President) an excoriation of the reformers in government, and asked 'Will we, a great power, Russia, which was famed through the ages for its invincible army, where honour and dignity were held in high esteem, and where the motherland was sacrosanct – will we really reduce this army to poverty and arbitrariness?... Let me remind all the "dividers" of Russia into "banana republics" that Russians and Bashkirs, Udmurts and Karelians, Yakuts and Chukchis, Kalmyks and Jews, Chechens and Ossetians were united in the Russian Army for centuries. Let us take a closer look at who and what is dividing us during this "time of troubles" described as "the new democracy". Can we really no longer live together on Russian soil?... We must not allow anyone to destroy with one blow the memory which is the link between the past and the present, to claim that everything is beginning from scratch today, that Russia's history has no meaning'.[194] He claimed not to be advocating the rebirth of

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[192] Interviewed in *Moskovskie Novosti* (15-22 January 1995). Cited in *Russia and Eurasia Documents,* 1995: 154-155.

[193] Hero of the Soviet Union Rutskoi was Yeltsin's Vice-President in 1991-1993. He sided with the Congress of People's Deputies in its showdown with Yeltsin for which he was jailed. After forming a party "Derzhava" and campaigning unsuccessfully for president, he became governor of Kursk Oblast.

[194] Cited in *Russia and Eurasia Documents,* 1993: 231.

the Soviet Union, however, and that the creation of the CIS was the best solution there was at the time, given the half baked agreements of Belovezhskaia. Rather, he advocated a 'strong state' on the current territory of the Russian Federation; yet the implication was that this state would dominate the former Soviet Union and the form such domination was to take was unclear as it often was for derzhavniki – clearly, this echoed sentiments familiar to the 19th century nationalists, and was in practice often close to restorationism.

Unlike many statists and Communists, who envisioned a multiethnic state, some nativists – Slavophiles who believed that Russia should return to her traditional peasant roots and have little to do with the outside world – 'have insisted on a theocratic Russian state consisting of the territories populated by orthodox east Slavic peoples... they alone reject Eurasianism as yet another entanglement that will distract Russia from its spiritual and economic needs' (Prizel, 1998: 232). But they often found common ground with the Communist Party.

Well-known politicians such as Evgenii Ambartsumov, Sergei Baburin and Oleg Rumiantsev used the legislative forum to disseminate statist anti-Western ideas and influence foreign policy. Nationalist views were shared by the Speaker of Parliament, Ruslan Khasbulatov, who also supported patriots and statists in an attempt to gain allies against Yeltsin, giving them floor time in parliamentary sessions. Newspapers, such as *Den* (renamed *Zavtra* after being banned following the October 1993 clash between parliament and president) provided media exposure for extreme nationalist views.

The Communist Party and Russian nationalism

Gennadii Ziuganov and other officials of the Communist Party talked of 'the targeted subversion of Russian spirituality' and the destruction of 'the great Eurasian power'. They criticised the 'Yeltsin-Kozyrev foreign policy course' which was not 'based on a sober appraisal of the realities of contemporary international life but on propaganda utopias in which even our Western "partners" themselves have never believed. Russia has gradually lost all its allies and its international positions. Any timid attempts to bring up Russian interests are cut

short with harsh bellows, as happened recently in Budapest.[195] On the other hand, the adventurism and unpredictability of the Russian authorities in the internal affairs are pushing our East and Central European neighbours into NATO's embrace'.[196]

The Communist Party drew on Slavophile and Eurasianist thinking as well as some remnants of Communist thought, but mainly emphasised a strong state and the memory of the Soviet Union as a 'respected' world power. This was not particularly Marxist, and indeed 'for the revamped Russian communists to splice together a representation of Russia with explicit references to both these traditions [spiritual and statist nationalism] and to put it to good discursive work despite the aggressively nonspiritual history of the Communist movement itself is no mean feat' (Neumann: 175). But it makes sense when viewed through the lens of Russia's history. Ziuganov 'updated' many aspects of Soviet ideology in order to manage this feat: 'foremost among them are modifications of Marxist theory to accommodate the Russian idea more fully and frankly. [By jettisoning] those elements of Marxist-Leninist theory that interfered with the wholehearted endorsement of the Russian idea during the Soviet period, while retaining most if not all of the others' (Scanlan, 1996: 38). Communist ideas essentially became subsumed into the more effective nationalist ideas which resonated with the public.[197] The Communist Party believed that Russia should lead 'a world order that is at odds with the existing Western-liberal model' (Prizel: 231). And so 'the others of this [representation] were not only a hostile "West" but also the very forces of cosmopolitanism and globalization that it was said to have set in train and to control' (Neumann: 168-169).

The Communist Party used the most evocative of nationalist symbols to promote its vision of Russia when (also in January 1995), a declaration at the party's Third Congress 'to the citizens of Russia' appealed to them 'in this difficult hour for the Fatherland. Russia has not been threatened by a misfortune on such a

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[195] The December 1994 CSCE Summit.

[196] Published in *Sovetskaia Rossiia* (5 October 1995) and cited in *Russia and Eurasia Documents*, 1995: 128-146.

[197] An opinion poll carried out in 1999 showed that respondents viewed 'people carrying portraits of Stalin' far more favourably than unfavourably (Poll carried out by VTsIOM, in Skidelsky & Senokosov, 2000: *Russia on Russia*, June 2000). VTsIOM (or VCIOM) was the All-Russian Centre for Public Opinion Research, an independent polling organization founded during perestroika and under the directorship of its founder, Iurii Levada, since 1992.

scale... since the Battle of Stalingrad. The ruling regime's policy has not just led the country into an impasse; it has brought it to the brink of national catastrophe. The time for action has come... Russia, a great power of the modern world, had, has, and will have another path'.[198]

The alliance of Reds with 'browns' (extreme nationalists), the birth of which was mentioned in connection with the last days of the Soviet Union, was therefore maintained by their shared hostility to the West and common identification with a certain vision of Russia.

The Church and Russian nationalism

At the same time, the Orthodox Church came to be the most respected of all Russian institutions, as shown by opinion polls over several years. The Church had become an influential member of the cultural elite. Russia-wide polls taken by VTsIOM[199] in June 1992, October 1993 and March 1994 'found the Church to be consistently the highest rated of seven Russian institutions... (the presidency, the government, the army, the secret police, the trade unions, and the press. The army consistently came in second)... In January 1995 a Russia-wide poll by VTsIOM 'found the Russian Orthodox Church to be the most trusted of eleven institutions' (Dunlop, 2000: 1). The Church was to play a role in committing Russians to the defence of their Orthodox 'brethren' in Serbia, and generally in advocating a role for the 'great' Russian state. Russian messianism and Eurasianist statism, anti-Westernism and communitarianism began to feature in the Communist Party's programme too, with the influence of religion noticeable.

Statist nationalism becomes the core nationalist argument

Views among the conservative alliance changed with time, and the idea of recreating the Russian Empire or the Soviet Union had faded within a couple of years, so that 'among those [who believed that Russia's identity was that of a union, like the USSR, some had]... decided by late 1993–early 1994 that Russian national identity could crystallise in a union with Ukraine and Belarus rather than within the entire post-Soviet space were the leader of the Russian Public Union,

[198] Published in *Pravda* (24 January 1995), and cited in *Russia and Eurasia Documents*, 1995: 125-126

[199] See footnote 195.

Sergei Baburin, and the majority of leaders of the National Salvation front, such as Igor Nikolaev, Yuri Belyaev [and so on]... all speak about eastern Slavs, "one history, one nation, one Russia"' (Tolz, 1998: 1000). And as we have seen, the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, under Ziuganov, had also followed this path. In 1995, the party led by Baburin (Russian National Union) was still stating in its Party Programme (decided at its Fourth Congress on 26 March 1995), that 'the collapse of the Soviet Union (of historical Russia), [led] to incalculable suffering and losses for all the former Soviet republics, the collapse of economic links and economic collapse, local wars and conflicts, a stream of refugees, national enmity and hatred, as well as to the collapse of that geopolitical national unity, which for centuries made up the foundation of Russian identity, embodying in itself of the historical way of life of Russia' (Pashentsev, 1998: 144-145). Historical Russia formed the core of a Eurasian space. In this text the Soviet Union is always followed by the word Russia in parentheses to emphasize their congruence.

The end of pro-Westernism as the dominant elite view

The attacks of these nationalist groups were extremely effective in changing the dominant view of Russian identity among the elite; this was achieved partly through changing the views espoused by surviving members of the elite, and partly by enforcing a change in personnel. Soon almost every member of the elite could be heard advocating nationalist views of Russia and hence a more 'independent' foreign policy. Despite this, in the rough consensus of pragmatic nationalism which dominated from the mid-1990s onwards, the vision of Russia as a modern and civilised part of the West did not entirely disappear, and Russian statesmen and high officials clearly perceived themselves in this light. The dominant elite view became something of a mixture of anti-Western nationalism and a sense that Russia, despite everything, was a civilised European county; at least, it was more Western than Asian. The result was a consensus on pragmatic nationalism, or balancing of various foreign policy vectors reflecting an uneasy consensus on national identity.

The end of the 'romantic' period of pro-Westernism and the victory of such views was the result of two factors. First, the Atlanticists had failed to develop a

coherent vision of Russian identity that resonated among elite and public. Second, the reformers failed to achieve positive results in people's daily lives and in Russian foreign policy: they were successfully blamed for the catastrophic situation in which Russians found themselves and the apparent inability of the state to achieve success in its international goals (Ponarin, 1999: 3).

Thus the Russian elite had failed to 'find a unifying idea acceptable to most of the Russian people' (Zevelev, 2002c: 458-459). The liberal democrat/Atlanticist vision came unstuck as a result of the fact that until 1990, 'it appeared that anti-communism – expressed "positively" by allusions to the imperative of joining the "civilised world" (the West) – and the celebration of individualism, always provided sufficient wind to raise their rhetorical sails. As a consequence, Communism's collapse represented a crisis for democratic discourse. It now had no "other"... the democrats had developed no national purpose that might psychologically absorb some of the shocks visited on society beginning in 1992. There was no greater good to justify the sacrifices and the suffering' (Urban, 1998: 975).[200]

The two flaws of the Westernising philosophy of the young reformers merged, as the catastrophic situation faced by ordinary Russians and international weakness preyed on the lack of resonance for ordinary Russians of their vision. The liberal democrats had united around an anti-Communist agenda, but 'were never particularly interested in defining Russian national interests [and as a result]... were not ready – intellectually or psychologically – to compete with consistent nationalists' (Kortunov, 2004: paragraphs 25-26).[201] 'The political strength of the nationalist representation began to work on the Westernising representation, stripping it of what came to be known as its "romantic" tendency to hold up the "West" as an entity to be unequivocally copied... Nationalist representation came complete with references back to an unbroken and proud

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[200] See also Prizel (1998: 217).

[201] Writing in January 1993, Ramazan Abdulatipov, had argued that owing to its mix of peoples, cultures and languages, 'the Russian Federation really is a "model of the world as a whole". Perhaps that is why we in Russia sometimes find it difficult to summon up the strength and indicate our unity. And this characteristic has basic meaning in determining not only the priorities of Russian statehood but also the conditions and future of the whole world order' (Cited in *Russia and Eurasia Documents*, 1993).

national history... the nationalist representation drew its strength from the narratives it told about itself and its role in Russian history' (Neumann: 169-170).

The failure of Russian intellectuals in Yeltsin's commission to formulate a 'national idea' in August 1996 was indicative. By the mid-1990s, many influential Russian foreign policy-makers realized that by embracing the ideology of liberalism and democracy, Russia seemed to confine itself to the secondary role of a country 'in transition' in the international arena. Such countries are led, judged, praised, and punished for progress or lack of it by others. In the absence of an equal partnership with the US, Moscow's overarching concept of international relations required adjustment. Kozyrev's 'Russia joining the civilized world' was replaced with Primakov's 'Russia as one of the centers of power in a multipolar world' (Zevelev, 2002c: 458-459). Those opposed to Yeltsin for various reasons – many of which were bound up with competing conceptions of Russia's place in the world – found that a nationalist discourse stressing Russia's alleged greatness and the requirement not to kow-tow to 'the West' became powerful tools in the foreign policy debate.

Election results and opinion polls offer mixed evidence of the broader Russian population's enthusiasm for nationalist messages, because nationalists were supported to some extent merely because they offered opposition to the ruinous economic policies of the reformers. In the Duma elections in 1993, nationalist parties achieved great success,[202] and 'Russian liberals of all shadings... were ideologically and politically defeated by ultra-nationalist champions of *velikoderzhavie* ['great-powerism']. In a startling about-face a few days after the elections, Andrei Kozyrev suddenly changed his rhetoric and started talking about the need to "defend Russian national interests at all costs". Interestingly, he also became quite tough with regard to Russia's dealing with the West. This admitted defeat of the government's foreign policy agenda amounted to an ill-concealed attempt at jumping on the bandwagon of Russian *velikoderzhavie'* (Kortunov, 1999: 34). This incorporation of the opposition was sometimes physical. Viktor

[202] In 1993 the party of the government, Russia's Choice, managed to win 70 seats (of the total in the Duma of 450), while Zhirinovskii's LDPR won 64, the Communist Party 48 (and its close ally the Agrarian Party 33 seats); Yabloko won 23 seats. In 1995 the Communist Party won 157 seats, Zhirinovskii's LDPR 51 seats, Nash Dom Rossiia 55 seats and Yabloko 45. Of the others, the Agrarian Party won 20 seats this time round.

Aksichits, for example, 'a prominent patriotic ideologue, publish[ed] an essay excoriating the present government for anti-Russian policies and raise[d] its removal from office to the level of "a policy of all-national salvation"' (Urban, 1998: 978). Within weeks, Aksichits joined the government as an adviser to First Deputy Prime Minister Boris Nemtsov. Similarly, the Communist Party's 'most prominent ideologue, Nikolai Podberezkin, while never flinching in his resolve to rid the country of those "anti-popular", "anti-national" elements that have seized and are wrecking the Russian state, can find time to pen the political programme of the "party of power", NDR [Nash Dom Rossiia]' (Urban, 1998: 978).

In 1999, when asked 'Are you sorry that the USSR has disintegrated?' 74% of respondents answered 'Yes'. Some 72% thought that Russia was no longer a great power. When asked to list Russia's enemies respondents agreed that Western industrial and financial circles (28%), the US (22%), NATO (19%),[203] Oligarchs and bankers (17%), Democrats (15%), Russophobes (13%) (Senokosov, 1999). Further polls on the role of the army and security services in political life did also seem to suggest that 'the majority of Russians would put state security above individual rights (Senokosov, 1999: 10).[204] A comparison of results from 1994 and 1999 also showed that the trend over the decade was, if anything, towards a hardening of views (thus roughly matching the trend shown by the political elite). In 1994 for example, 44% of respondents answered yes to the question, 'would it have been better if things in this country had remained as they were before 1985?' In 1999, 58% thought so. Moreover, a lower percentage of respondents thought that closer links between Russia and the West were a good thing in 1999 than in 1994 (Levada, 1999: 15).

Many if not most of the ideas that were to dominate the elite discourse of the 1990s had come into common usage by the end of 1992. From late 1992 (the time of the Seventh Congress of Peoples Deputies), nationalist ideas seeped into the dominant discourse. Zevelev (2002a: 21) has said that 'Although the 1993 crisis and the subsequent adoption of the new constitution, as well as the 1993, 1995, 1996, 1999, and 2000 elections changed the relative strength of each perspective, these events hardly led to the emergence of radically new ideas in the area of

[203] The poll was taken before the bombing of Yugoslavia in the Kosovo conflict.
[204] For example, 50% of respondents thought that the army had too small an influence on society, and 37% that the security services commanded too small an influence on society.

nation-building and security policies'. Within a couple of years of the end of the Soviet Union, the language of Yeltsin, Kozyrev and other senior members of government had changed along with the weight of dominant ideas in the elite, and the course of Russian foreign policy with it. Hence Kozyrev's repeated assertion of the fact that 'the entire geographic area of the former USSR is a sphere of vital interest to us'.[205] In time a form of statism plus Eurasianism came to be accepted by many in Russian politics, with consequences for the relationship of Russia to the two organisations of the West intent on expanding to the East.[206] Yeltsin told the Congress of People's Deputies in April 1992 that 'Russia is rightfully a great power by virtue of its history, its place in the world and of its spiritual and material potential' (Truscott, 1997: 37).

'The thrust of Russia's foreign policy in 1993 was summed up by the first issue for the year of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs journal, *International Affairs*, which was dedicated entirely to the theme, "Russia Has Entered the Year 1993 To Be a Renewed Great Power"' (*Russia and Eurasia Documents*, 1993: 296). The adoption of the new constitution after the showdown of October 1993, led to elections to the Federation Council in late 1993. The lower house, or Duma, was dominated by opposition parties. In December 1993 the Communist Party, LDPR and Agrarians obtained 32.2% of Duma seats; in 1995 the Communists, Agrarians, and the Liberal Democrat Party (there were a number of other oppositionist factions) between them gained 51% of seats.

Nationalism was seen as a powerful peg on which to hang various policies, one that aided attack on the government with the use of easily accessible symbols of a great past, and thus one that the government, President, his administration and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were keen to deny their opponents. Many of the leaders 'changed their opinions during the early 1990s. Not only did Yeltsin and Kozyrev change the way they described Russia's "national idea" and its consequent foreign policy rights and duties, but some politicians changed their party

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[205] This quotation is taken from Kozyrev's 1993 article in *NATO Review*. In this article, however, he was still reiterating his desire for Russia to make the transition to 'civilized condition... and a "common space" where everyone is interdependent and helps one another'.

[206] As Parkhalina (2002: 1; and reiterated when interviewed in Moscow by the author, 12 July 2002) put it, 'to a large extent, Russia's foreign and security policy is influenced by Russian cultural tradition. For many Russians, especially those of the older generation, interaction with the West is above all a psychological problem'.

allegiance. For example, Sergei Glaziev, in the beginning of the 1990s, when he was a member of Gaidar team, was the first who suggested that Russia have to joint [sic] NATO' (Kosals, 2001: 5). Then he joined the CPRF, strongly opposed to NATO 'in general and its enlargement in particular' (Kosals, 2001: 5). Despite this, some liberals continued to hold fast to the idea that nationalist ideas involving messianic visions for Russia would lead to disaster, and the only realistic route for the country to take was a balanced one that included good relations with the West.

After this point it became accepted that nationalism, or, at least repeated criticism of certain Western institutions and policies must be an integral part of a successful political programme. Only rare politicians (like Konstantin Borovoi) and the moderate and independent-minded Yabloko party, did not stick to the script at all times. The success of parties and candidates including in their programme ostentatious nationalist language in the parliamentary and presidential elections of 1995 and 1996 only emphasised this requirement. After this, even supposed 'new reformers' like Boris Nemtsov began to use the language of the nationalists.[207] This was combined with an overtly pragmatic desire to deal with the West. The Vancouver Declaration by the Presidents of Russia and the US, in April 1993, for example, asserted 'Russia's harmonious integration into the community of democratic nations and the world economy is essential'.

Alienation from the West

One major factor in the success of the nationalist opposition was a quickly developing sense of international shame: Russia's international weakness turned into a sense of humiliation at the hands of the West. The change in the dominant view among the elite on Russian national identity was specifically a result of a widespread sense of rejection by or alienation from the West. Thus, 'since the end of the Cold War, Russians have encountered a powerful, alien culture that makes them feel powerless, disadvantaged and inferior. Globalization has nurtured the emergence of a global culture rooted in North-European Protestant ethic and epitomized by US culture. Many Russians who encounter this new standard culture find it alien and exclusionary. Yet because of the nature of globalization they

[207] In 1999, for example, he labelled NATO leaders as 'barbarous' (*Summary of World Broadcasts*, 3 June 1999).

cannot avoid it and are confronted by it every day: on television, in print media, in advertising' (Ponarin, 1999: 3). The defeat of the "romantic" tendency in Russian foreign policy is connected to the 'the European discourse on Russia... Russia was not recognised as a European country in a number of key social, political and economic contexts' (Neumann, 1999: 169). This led to the Russian elite searching for a way of asserting their roles as representatives of a 'great power' based on a different national identity.

Russian statist-nationalism had an impact on the national interest in shifting the parameters of the state's foreign policy priorities. By 1994, statists and national-patriots were making effective use of the fact that they were able to 'propagate their theories in legitimate and effective fora [such as parliament and the media]; attach them to powerful symbols; and obtain support from state actors and institutions. As a result, their ideas have had a palpable effect on the definition of Russia's interest... In a sense, the empowerment of statist-nationalist ideas has changed what is "politically correct" in Russian foreign policy' (Tuminez, 1996: 52-57). The old form of the question of Russia's national identity returned. In the 1990s, as in the past 'century and a half, the debate over Russian identity, nation formation, and Russia's future has focused primarily on Russia's relation to and interaction with the West' (Zevelev, 2002a: 13). In the 1990s this problem was to resurface and become the key to Russia's foreign policy, partly because 'non-communist Russia's challenge [is] to define itself with reference to Europe on new terms' (Szporluk, 1994: 9-10).

The transition from Communism to something new put Russia in the position of a '"pupil" of advanced countries... Although the Soviet system (like the Soviet Union itself) stopped existing as a result of the cessation of the Cold War, and the Western ideas, it seemed, gained the upper hand, paradoxically, what happened in Russia wasn't a "military defeat" – to a much greater extent it was an act of self-liberation... The question of victory in the cold war is thus of primary importance for understanding the situation, which developed in Russian-Western relations after this confrontation stopped. "Undefeated" Russia wasn't a "liberated country" either – such was the status of countries of the former Warsaw treaty' (Trenin, 2004: 10).

As an article in *Krasnaia Zvezda*[208] pointed out in November 1995, 'The American side concentrates its main efforts on its own security... through support for stability across the vast expanses of Russia and not on cultivating a mighty superpower rival. Therefore, if you look at, say, the financial component of our countries' relations, what strikes you is a bias toward disarmament that is entirely out of proportion with the talk of "partnership". This swallows up at least half, if not more, of all the resources that were supposed, in theory, to serve the cause of the formation and consolidation of democracy and market reforms in Russia'.[209,210]

Yeltsin's attempts to intervene in Bosnia generally met with humiliation when, for example, Tudjman refused to go to Moscow for a trilateral summit. The West was blamed. 'Politically, Russia's Balkan policies had become bankrupt, giving rise to increased criticism of Yeltsin by his domestic enemies. Combined with the war in Chechnya, the war in Bosnia was pushing Russian foreign policy more than ever before toward an isolated, anti-Western position' (Donaldson & Nogee, 2000: 239).

Adranik Migranian[211] complained in the summer of 1993 that, 'for too long we have kept the West under the impression that a positive policy in the case of the Soviet Union, and then also Russia, is when we accept all the proposals by the Western countries. We supported Germany's unification, renounced the "Brezhnev Doctrine", withdrew troops from eastern Europe, and supported the war in the Persian Gulf. But no sooner had President Yeltsin come forward recently with proposals on Yugoslavia and the near abroad which were somewhat different from those of the West than they immediately started telling us: it means that your commie-patriots are gaining in strength'. Migranian's reasoning was that 'for too long we were unable to send a clear-cut signal to the West, concerning our own objectives and interests. That is why any sign of independence in Russian foreign

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[208] The official newspaper of the Ministry of Defence.

[209] Mikhail Pogorelii, *Krasnaia Zvezda*, 1 November 1995. Cited in *Russia and Eurasia Documents*, 1993: 256.

[210] The sense of exclusion for ordinary people even resulted from the new 'Western' language of the business elite which 'betrays idolatry before the West. Everything, like there, it must even sound the same... politicians, secretaries, press agencies, and officials of the new democratic epoch... the simple people do not hear [understand] your speech, and for this reason they frequently do not trust you... We must feel our backwardness, our insignificance, and become reconciled to them' (Sergei Gerbov, *Rabochnaia Tribuna*, 17 March 1993; cited in *Russia and Eurasia Documents*, 1993: 216-218).

[211] Member of the Presidential Council; interviewed in *Moscow News*, 18 June 1993. Cited in *Russia and Eurasia Documents*, 1993: 316-317.

policy catches the Western countries unawares and seems abnormal. But this is exactly what must be normal. Our partners must be persuaded that we have certain specific interests and they have to be reckoned with... the latest developments, when Estonia was admitted to the Council of Europe, have shown that they are absolutely reluctant to take our interests in the Baltics into account. This is an obvious case of a double standard'.

After October 1993, what Medvedev called 'culture two' became dominant. This is the often repeated phase of Russian political life when Russia's identity is constructed by 'distinguishing itself from the other; [commonly] attributing the role of the other to the West... In the mid 1990s, Russia's national interests are largely formulated by seeking points of divergence with the West... the very concept of national interest in post-Soviet Russia was nourished by anti-Western rhetoric' (Medvedev, 1999: 43-44). Yeltsin and Kozyrev on a number of occasions, in fact, 'complained about the "non-constructive" policies of its Western partners' (Sergounin, 1996: 11). By 1994 Kozyrev was warning his foreign audience that 'aloofness on the part of the West, attempts to keep Russia out by means of new "iron curtains" and cordons sanitaires would merely provide fertile ground for nationalist and imperial extremism' (Kozyrev, 1994: 6). This was one of several warnings to the West on the theme (in this case veiled references to NATO expansion). The Foreign Minister added that 'Russia is "doomed" to be a great power' (Kozyrev, 1994: 6), and that he did not 'expect the West to applaud our every move. But we have no intention of copying every step taken by the West' (Kozyrev, 1994: 13).[212]

Regarding France's recent testing of nuclear weapons in the Pacific, *Sovetskaia Rossiia* asked in September 1995 why 'Moscow officials passed over Jacques Chirac's completely unforgivable statements. However, the emasculation of all that was specific to our nation among those in charge of our foreign policy, who are singing in the choir of the Atlantic political intriguers under the baton of Washington, took place long ago. The Bosnia War and the genocide of the Serbs

[212] In a rare acknowledgement of how Russia's actions might be seen by the rest of the world and negatively affect Russia's situation, Sergei Stankevich (in *Literaturnaia Gazeta*, 10 February 1993; cited in *Russia and Eurasia Documents*, 1993: 204), admitted that 'As bitter as it may be to acknowledge, the Russification of the former republics and the vastness of Russia have made the Russians an "imperial" nation in the eyes of the whole world'.

have demonstrated that our "friend Bill"... our "friend Helmut"... and, indeed, other friends from NATO and the United Nations don't give a damn about present-day Russia and its leadership. What is more, they have serious grounds for acting in the way: Russia is visibly weakening.'[213]

The pragmatic nationalist consensus

As noted in Chapter 4, by the mid-1990s some form of consensus was formed at the new centre of Russian politics, 'pragmatic nationalism' associated in foreign policy with Evgenii Primakov. By 1994, most of the elite agreed that their country should preserve its great power status in the form of a Eurasian state distinct from – and acting independently from – the West. This formula for Russian national identity echoes Slavophilism, Eurasianism, but also contains elements of pragmatic Westernism. After this point, the Russian elite began to act in ways consonant with this concept of Russian national identity, and the West began to be viewed explicitly through this lens. Russian national identity was never a settled, happy issue, but most of the elite could agree that Russia was a former superpower which would not be able to regain its former glory very quickly. Rather, Russia had to adapt to a role as a regional great power. The well-chronicled chaos or anarchy of Russian foreign policy-making reflected the fact that the state had not been built into anything stable; but there was some stability in Russian national identity as regards its relationship with the West. One of the key themes running through Russian political thought over the past two centuries has been the division between those with positive and those with negative views on the matter. This theme continued in the post-Soviet period, and the pragmatic consensus seemed to be one way to deal with the issue, by defining Russia's role as independent from the West.

The consensus combined nationalism with some remaining elements of pro-Western sentiments resulting from a pervading sense that Russia was and remained a part of the West. Russia saw itself as belonging to the same civilisation as the Western world: 'in the fight against terrorism and Islamist extremism and aggressive separatism. We are in the same camp. We are part of one civilised and

[213] *Sovetskaia Rossiia*, 23 September 1995. Cited in *Russia and Eurasia Documents*, 1995: 251-252.

democratic world' (*Izvestiia,* 29 September 1999).[214] The 'Russian elite and, to a large extent, society, insist on keeping a traditional sovereign identity for the country. Integration, in prevailing representations, must help Russia defend its own interests most effectively in the new global sphere, and not turn Russia itself into a "new West". According to an apt expression, "New Russia" and "the New West" will be in a state of interaction, not integration... Never before in national history was the influence of the West as strong as in the years from 1988 to 1993. The official Moscow set itself the goal of making Russia enter in the composition of the enlarged EU in the rights of one of the leading states of "the New West". The Kremlin and the foreign ministry confirmed that "New Russia" is, as before, the "great Russia", while also being "civilised" now, e.g. in fact "European" (Trenin, 2004: 10).

A sense of Primakov's priorities is to be found in a speech given on the 200th anniversary of the birth of 19th Century Czarist minister Aleksandr Gorchakov soon after his appointment. Primakov identified Gorchakov as a model for Russia's approach following the collapse of the USSR. He had been able to rebuild Russia's power and influence after its defeat in the Crimean War. 'According to Primakov, Gorchakov believed that "a vigorous foreign policy" was essential for creating the conditions that would allow Russia to renew itself at home and regain influence abroad... Russia, even weakened by defeat, can pursue an active foreign policy... Second, Gorchakov insisted that Russia's foreign policy must not be limited to a single direction or area of concern ... Third, as Primakov notes with approval, Gorchakov had no doubt that Russia had "enough strength" to play a leading role in the world. Fourth, Gorchakov understood that Russia could always exploit the resentment many smaller powers feel vis-à-vis larger ones... [all of which leads] Primakov to say that "there are no constant enemies, but there are

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[214] An article in *Izvestiia* of 26 November 1999 argued that 'the two options are either the east with its frightening power and negative energy and lack of democratic traditions and lack of sympathy for the individual human freedom, (backwards) and forwards there's only the pan-European unity whose roots are in Judaeo-Christianity... But if we fail to detach ourselves form this natural feeling of hostility towards the West, and if we don't draw the line between disagreement and hatred, we will allow the boat of our government to drift towards the authoritarian east. We will make irremediable/irreversible mistake by doing so... In the last century, the genius Russian thinker and ecstatic mystic, Vladimir Sergeevich Solovev, wrote verses in which he was asking his motherland which east do you want to be: the east of Xerxes or the east of Christ? It seems that it's time again to answer this harsh and direct question.'

constant national interests'" (Goble, 1998). This admiration for Gorchakov and the interpretation of his policies tells us much about Primakov's foreign policy thinking. Primakov clearly saw his role as Russia's top diplomat in these terms.[215]

The overlap in language among political parties was, not surprisingly, confusing. 'The Yeltsin regime was skilful enough to co-opt even the most extreme nationalists, who were much closer to the regime's byzantine worldview than was the democratic left' (Reddaway and Glinski, 2001: 364). The language of great powerism and suspicion of the West was easy for leaders to fall into, given the continuities of the post-Soviet elite from the Soviet elite.

As the language of nationalism gained popularity, issues such as the Russian diaspora also grew in importance. The loaded terms 'near abroad' or 'former Soviet Union' which were used by nationalists and centrists, had been adopted by members of the presidential circle; the term implicitly suggested Russia's right to dominance of the region – which had already been explicitly stated. Referring to the CIS suggested an acceptance of the right to independence of these states.

In May 1995 Clinton and Yeltsin held a summit at which 'the leaders of the two states stressed: Today we understand one another, our worries and concerns better. We failed to reach unity of views on all positions, but the main result of the talks is that the rumors and conjecture regarding insoluble differences or even a crisis in relations between Russia and the United States were convincingly overturned. The presidents coordinated a practical action program designed to implement extensive plans for cooperation between our countries in the immediate future.'[216] Practical cooperation on the basis of 'Russian national interests' held the field.

The pragmatic consensus involved Russia developing a 'great power' rather than superpower mentality, like India and China. Such states are 'preoccupied with maintaining and strengthening their independence and sovereignty'. The 'globally

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[215] Interestingly, Igor Ivanov, in 2001, also referred approvingly to Gorchakov: 'Gorchakov's main objective was to create the best possible external conditions for the liberal domestic reforms initiated by Emperor Alexander II... Gorchakov was well aware that the enormous expanse of Russia, its unique geographic position bridging Europe and Asia, and its relatively insufficient economic development (compared to other leading world powers) called for an active but prudent foreign policy that avoided adventurism' (*Washington Quarterly*, 2001 [24:3]: 19).

[216] *Krasnaia Zvezda*, 12 may 1995. Cited in *Russia and Eurasia Documents*, 1995: 241-242.

omnipresent US and the countries of the European Union, which were committed to transatlantic solidarity and institutions, usually did not view the world in these terms. Instead, both the US and the EU employed a rhetoric of globalization, integration, and democratic enlargement during the 1990s' (Zevelev, 2002c: 452). Unlike the US 'with its visions of "building a better world", Russia 'portrays itself in a more humble way... Russia describes itself as "one of the world's major countries, with centuries of history and rich traditions" (Zevelev, 2002c: 452).

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The West remained, as it had been for two hundred years, Russia's most significant external point of reference in the development of its identity debate. During the 1990s, the dominant view of Russia's national identity altered from pro-Westernism to a form of statist nationalism that emphasised the need for Russia to defend its national interests which meant in practice a degree of cooperation with the West; this altered concept of national identity, based on historical formulas, led to a change in how Russian policy-makers viewed Russia's role in the world. The West had played a large part in this process. Disillusionment with the West combined with Russia's historically based national identity debate led to the end of the honeymoon and a familiar perception among the elite of Russia and its role in the world.

CHAPTER 8
RUSSIAN AND NATO:
THE CONSTRUCTIVIST EXPLANATION

The Westernising view which dominated the early leadership came to be replaced by a more 'balanced' view of Russia's identity which built on Eurasianist and Slavophile elements but which had at its centre an avowedly pragmatic and 'statist' view of Russia as a great power with a right to dominate the former Soviet republics. The aim of this chapter is to see if these developments help explain Russia's attitude towards NATO. The chapter will also examine NATO's role in the debate and how the Alliance itself acted to cause Russian perceptions of the West to change – and how this in turn influenced Russia's foreign policy.

NATO's member states had almost immediately begun to discuss enlargement after the end of the Cold War. By June 1994 the Partnership for Peace (PfP) had been signed by Russia despite misgivings that it was a means of expediting enlargement. Despite further doubts held by many in the elite, Russia joined the Permanent Joint Council (PJC), after tortuous negotiations, in 1997. New members indeed joined NATO in 1999. Decisions towards expansion were therefore the outcome of several years of discussion, which included dialogue with Russia.

NATO and the challenge to Russian identity

The westernising elite

At the beginning of Yeltsin's term as President, Kozyrev called for close relations with NATO as part of the pro-Western policy. He spoke of 'the need to "advance eastwards" the lines of "common defense"... of the values of the [CSCE]' (Glinski Vassiliev, 2000: 6). Russia's aim was to achieve close relations on equal terms (hence partnership) and a new pan-European security structure on the basis of the

CSCE.[217] 'Atlanticists at the helm of Russian foreign policy had no problem in principle with the idea of an "eastward expansion" of "European values" (i.e. the West) against the Asian "rest". In fact, the 'only divergence between them and some Western proponents of NATO expansion was whether Russia was entitled to be a part of the West's expansionary drive, or whether it should be relegated to "the rest"' (Glinski Vassiliev, 2000: 6-7).

NATO's decision to enlarge without Russia, to relegate Russia to 'the rest' was the catalyst for change. NATO expansion implied not only exclusion, but also seemed to demonstrate the continuing view in the West of the potential threat emanating from Russia. This development played a powerful role in changing the weight of views in the Russian elite and would mar relations between Russia and the West. It had a powerful influence on Russians' perception of their country's place in the world.

The end of the 'honeymoon'

By around the middle of 1992, the prevalence among Russia's elite of the somewhat naïve pro-Western views dominant at the beginning of the year was coming to an end. Nationalists suspicious of the West became increasingly vociferous – they were more and more evident in public debate in the media and parliament and gained positions of power in the state hierarchy. Other members of the elite changed their public opinions (see Chapter 7). The rise of anti-NATO sentiment, combined with this articulation of the need for cooperation, as long as Russia's 'special' importance was taken into account, was part of the general turn away from pro-Westernism caused by those factors identified in Chapter 7, and the rise of pragmatic nationalism. But it was also a key *cause* of that change. NATO played an important role in how the national identity debate proceeded.

Relations between Russia and NATO 'have always been a particularly difficult foreign policy sector, which is not surprising in view of the heavy burden

[217] Having championed the CSCE/OSCE throughout the 1990s, in December 2004 Russia blocked the adoption of the OSCE's budget, calculating that it didn't meet Russia's interests. Relations were spoiled for two reasons: first, 'because the OSCE had the bad taste to remind the Russians about the commitments taken several times to remove her troops from or close bases in independent states of the former USSR'. Second, because the OSCE 'also took great pains to monitor elections in these countries, which cause the Russian Foreign Ministry to complain of 'disequilibrium' in the OSCE's activities (*Le Monde*, 9 February 2005).

of mutual distrust and suspicion that grew over more than 40 years' (Kelin[218], 2004: 17).[219] NATO's decision to retain the Cold War characteristic of an exclusive military alliance did nothing to remove such distrust and the decision to enlarge in the post-Soviet era provided fuel for the nationalists in Russia. Westernisers in the Russian elite therefore complained that NATO expansion merely handed opponents a golden opportunity to damage their credibility, gain seats in parliamentary elections and hurt the entire 'reform' programme. It demonstrated to many in the Russian elite that the West in fact did not see Russia as belonging fully to the Western world. It was threatening because it implied that the West ultimately saw a military guarantee as necessary in its dealings with Russia. The rise of anti-Westernism and anti-NATO feelings were tied up with each other.

The effects of exclusion were influential in their own right. 'Being "outside" affects the way people perceive themselves and their environment. It also affects their relationships with both "insiders" and fellow "outsiders". Exclusion from the expanding NATO alliance influences outsiders' security perceptions and the way they view their role in Europe. The perception of exclusion, therefore, has important consequences for the domestic and foreign policies of outsiders' (Light et al, 2000a: 1).

A sense of exclusion was not only the result of NATO's official plans to expand. It was also caused by the tenor of US political debates, speeches and in much of the US media. US politicians and commentators often took an extremely hostile or disdainful attitude to Russia. The official documents argued otherwise: talk of 'equal partnership' (NATO, 2000: paragraph 4) were added to portrayals of Russia as an important part of NATO's future. Javier Solana, on Russian television in May 1998, for example, said that 'It is difficult to imagine [Europe] without Russia... basic European organizations such as NATO and the European Union should be open to all European countries" (*Summary of World Broadcasts,* 28 May 1998). As Kober (1996) pointed out, however, the Russians were not 'blind': 'Are we supposed to win the Russians' trust by telling them NATO expansion is not

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[218] Andrei Kelin was First Deputy Director, Department of General European Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia.

[219] As Dmitri Trenin put it, 'farsighted opponents of NATO expansion opposed its approaching the shores of the Vistula and Vltava if only not to let it come to the Neman and Narva. They feared and continue to fear not so much NATO expansion as the transformation of Russia's political regime into something like Scythians deeply inimical to the West' (*Moscow Times,* July 16, 1997).

directed against them? Are we to assume the Russians are that gullible? Apparently we are also to assume that they never read statements by prominent Americans to the contrary (Kober, 1996: paragraph 29).

These prominent American views were noted by Russian commentators. Kortunov (1998: 1-2) for example, in citing Brzezinski, Kissinger and many others, highlighted these 'Russophobic sentiments' in which Russia is either a supplicant, or, when it shows the least sign of revival and independence of policy, demonstrates a '"revival of Russian imperial potential"... In other words, each and every nation, except the Russians as an imperial nation, has the right to self-determination and national interests'. The tone of such notions suggests that 'Russia is not welcome in the "effective" security structures in Europe... The arguments in favour of NATO enlargement often have anti-Russian connotations, if not direct mentioning of Russian threat. Clashing with Russia's objections, they mutually reinforce each other. Moreover, investigation of both sides' strategic interests reinforces this point about the inescapable Russian-enlarged NATO contention' (Krivosheev, 1997: 192-193).

Trent Lott, the US Senate majority leader, argued that 'Those countries not invited to join NATO this summer [1997] should be assured that NATO enlargement will not be a one-time event. Otherwise, the security of Europe could be undermined as, for example, the Baltic States... succumb to the fear that they will be abandoned to the whims of a powerful neighbor for the second time this century.' William Safire, a prominent *New York Times* columnist, stated that 'Russia is authoritarian at heart and expansionist by habit'.[220] This was a reiteration of Kissinger's remarks (Kissinger, 1995 and 1996) on Russia's 'proclivity' for expansion. Brzezinski, too, had put forward this idea. Madeleine Albright,[221] testifying before the US Senate Foreign Relations Committee noted that 'questions about the future of Russia [remain and that]... one should not dismiss the possibility that Russia could return to the patterns of the past' (cited in Starr, 1998: 6). Mark Gage[222] stated in 1998 that Russian 'challenges' to US foreign policy – like the attempt at 'creating the "multipolar world" that prevents the United States

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[220] Cited in Zevelev (2002a: 6-7).
[221] Secretary of State at the time.
[222] Professional Staff Member for East Europe and the New Independent States Committee on International Relations, in the House of Representatives.

from exercising global leadership... will make the U.S. less able and willing to... assist or support states neighbouring Russia as they seek to consolidate their independence from Russian domination' Gage saw a sinister Russian plot in 'support' for President Lukashenko of Belarus for economic and political reasons: he was the 'first step' in Russia's dream of recreating the Soviet Union. Gage suggested that Russia's aim is to 'undermine NATO, with the ultimate objective of effectively getting the US out of Europe... While some argue that Russia's agreement to a NATO-Russia Council shows a new willingness to accept NATO and its expansion eastward, I would instead recommend that they watch closely how Russia seeks to influence the individual NATO allies and how it seeks to use the revisions in the [CFE Treaty]... Russia cares more about its future ability to affect affairs in Europe than about maintaining an effective organization that – along with the European Union – can link all of Europe into a cohesive, cooperative whole' (Gage, 1998).[223]

Russian nationalism and NATO

To the sense of exclusion were added powerful symbols of failure and humiliation which provided fuel for Russian nationalism. Pride of place was given to NATO and its supposed master, the US. Thus 'the communist-nationalist political opposition to Yeltsin's government at home quickly realized that the prospect of NATO's extension eastward could be exploited so as to undermine the government's nationalist credentials. Nationalists described dealings between the Russian leadership and NATO as betrayals of Russian national interests. Anti-Westerners 'blame NATO's opening to the East [on]... intrigues by anti-Russian forces in the West. They fear that foreign policy aimed at integrating Russia into Western institutions will relegate the country to a second-rate power and will insult Russia's national dignity' (Parkhalina, 2002: 2). Ziuganov was able to call on perhaps the most powerful symbol available to the opposition, the Great Patriotic

[223] Some Western commentators increased their own warnings on Russia's tendencies to aggression and expansion as the anti-NATO talk heated up in Russia. There was then a vicious circle of negative perceptions. The language used by Ziuganov, Zhirinovskii and others played its part in creating a certain image of Russia within Western capitals, in which the fear of Russian nationalism has helped determine NATO's policy of enlargement. This response has also given support to those in central and eastern European countries who argue that membership of NATO is required because of the persistent Russian threat to their security.

War, and link it to NATO expansion. NATO here was tied into the general anti-Western discourse among Russia's nationalists. A link could even be made between NATO and Nazi Germany, which was possible because of the rise of virulently anti-Western nationalism and the associated view of Russia's identity which they espoused. These were fuelled by NATO's moves. Yeltsin and Kozyrev could therefore be portrayed as traitors in the most emotive imagery available.

Ziuganov described as 'blasphemous' the fact that in 1994 'in Brussels on the 22nd June [the anniversary of the Nazi invasion of the USSR] our Foreign Minister Kozyrev, on behalf of Yeltsin, is signing a treaty on the entry of the Russian Federation into the Partnership for Peace programme'. As Chapter 7 described, the Communist Party managed to combine various nationalist and Communist ideas in some novel combinations. The use of the word 'blasphemous' here is one example. As Ziuganov explained, 'The real aim of this programme is not to guarantee peace, but the gradual introduction into NATO of former socialist states which used to be part of the Warsaw Pact. The new organisation, in this way, is set to become an instrument of geopolitical expansion to confirm a new world order. It was [president]... Bush who first introduced the concept of a new world order and he borrowed the term from Nazi Germany. After the unilateral dissolution of the Warsaw Treaty, Bush announced at a session of the NATO Council... that NATO and the military presence of the US in Europe are required for another 100 years or so. The new twist to US expansionism, which is implemented under the banner of PfP is aimed above all against Russia's rebirth as a great power'.[224] Ziuganov linked the expansion of NATO not only to Nazi Germany, but to the West's general attempt to destroy Russian power. Thus there was a link between the Nazi invasion and 'the establishment of a new world order in which as Pentagon specialists underline, the first aim is to prevent the rebirth of a rival great power from appearing on the territory of the former Soviet Union and other places. In the light of this the capitulation of Russian diplomacy must be seen as yet another betrayal of Russia's national interests on the 53rd anniversary of the beginning of Hitler's plan Barbarossa'.[225]

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[224] *Zasedanii Gosudarstvenoi Dumi;* Bulletin no. 42, 22 June 1994: 6, paragraph 1.
[225] *Zasedanii Gosudarstvenoi Dumi;* Bulletin no. 42, 22 June 1994: 6, paragraph 2.

Russian nationalists examined NATO and its plans for expansion through a 'great power lens' and 'created a new reality of an alleged anti-Russian strategy based exclusively on the inferred goal of primacy... many American policies would have bothered Russia little had they not interfered with the core of Russia's strategic vision, namely maintaining their role as a great power' (Zevelev, 2002c: 456). NATO expansion had become the most obvious result of the pro-Western policy.

In response, Yeltsin rapidly moved to close the rhetorical gap with the Communists, so that there was 'no longer a serious difference between government and opposition on the issue'.[226] He often took an extremely aggressive line towards NATO, playing the role of the tough statesman defending his country's national interests, and felt the need to threaten serious consequences if NATO were to expand. In December 1994, for example, he caused a stir at the CSCE Summit in Budapest by 'refusing to condemn the violence in Bosnia and sharply attacking NATO's plans for a fast-track expansion into the former Soviet satellite states of eastern Europe... Yeltsin mentioned a "cold peace"' (*Moscow Times,* December 8 1994). In his address to the Federal Assembly in February 1995, talking of 'the new democratic Russia', he explained that 'sometimes we hear people say that it is premature to discuss partnership with the new Russia. As a rule, this kind of talk conceals an intention to oust a potential rival. If such sentiments gain the upper hand in the West, all efforts to build a fairer and more secure world order will be thwarted. Mankind would not then stride towards the 21st century; it would instead be thrown back into the 19th century... such attempts are characterized by the declared intention to prod NATO towards an expansion to the east – to the detriment of joint efforts to formulate a new model of genuine pan-European security... the West wants to expand NATO for the ostensible reason of protecting East European countries from Moscow's evil intentions. Let me state quite frankly: we have no evil intentions. Whatever the controversies of the transition period, Russia is devoted to democratic values'.[227,228]

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[226] Allen Lynch, cited in Williams & Neumann, 2000: 382.
[227] Cited in *Russia and Eurasia Documents*, 1995: 6.
[228] Western concerns to protect the eastern European and former Soviet states from a possible Russian threat predated the end of the Soviet Union. In January 1991, for example, the NATO leadership had urged Gorbachev 'not to use force and intimidations against [the Baltic states]' (Hunns, 1997: 1). NATO Secretary General Wörner had also 'attempted to reassure the Warsaw

Defenders of the national interest

In the construction of national identity as it occurred in Russia in the 1990s, members of the elite clearly perceived their own role as defenders of the national interest to include overt hostility to NATO expansion. Opposition to NATO was a key factor in providing some unanimity among the elite. Thus 'the only issue we have more or less unity on, is our disapproval of NATO' (Rogov, in Kozyrev et al., 1996: 27). There are some 'fundamental foreign policy issues most of the political forces in Russia agree on. Extremely negative attitude toward NATO's enlargement is one of the issues that unite Russian political elite' (Zevelev: 2).[229] This was articulated 'through a new set of doctrinal documents' (Kassianova, 2001: 829-830), the national security and foreign policy documents of 1997 and 2000.

In public speeches, the language of 'national interests' and opposition to NATO expansion (and standing up for Russia's interests) had become predominant. In his state of the nation address of February 1996, Yeltsin stated that 'the possible expansion of NATO is the most serious current challenge to Russian interests' (RFE/RL, 25 February, 1996). The Defence Minister, Pavel Grachev, also in February 1996 and following a visit to Belgrade, stated that 'Russia would take "appropriate measures" to counter NATO enlargement... if NATO expands, Russia would "start to look for new partners in CEE and the CIS to set up a new politico-military alliance"' (RFE/RL, 12 February 1996). However, by June, Grachev was offering NATO cooperation if it would refrain from expansion. He 'supported making the current temporary liaison offices there permanent. NATO liaison officers were to be invited to work with the Russian General Staff. A

Pact countries of the West's good intentions and promised support for Gorbachev's reforms in the USSR in return for progress on human rights, including self-determination, "responsible behaviour in foreign policy and a reduced military potential"... The Soviet Union's demise took the West by surprise, but it was not wrong-footed... After their London Summit meeting in July 1990, the NATO Heads of State and Government, affirmed... that the Cold War was over. That should, in the opinion of some Western commentators, have led immediately to the disbanding of NATO, quid pro quo for the dismantling of the Warsaw Pact... Wörner engaged in a campaign to save the Alliance, and especially to keep the USA's participation in it... Wörner therefore continually warned his Western audiences about the East's superiority in the number of troops and in certain types of military equipment... and about its continued modernisation of its weaponry. Nevertheless, in May 1991, the US House of Representatives called for a reduction of US troops in Europe from 250,000 to 100,000' (Hunns, 1997: 1).

[229] See also Rogov (1996).

colonel-general was to head the office, giving it "much higher status" than the liaison offices of other PfP countries' (RFE/RL, 17 June 1996).

In the summer 1996 presidential elections, both Yeltsin and Ziuganov could agree that Russia should defend its 'interests' and oppose NATO expansion, and indeed Yeltsin was granted some breathing space by the US government, in order to manage this, by means of a pause in public discussion of NATO expansion plans. Once Yeltsin had secured a hard-fought victory, he began to criticise NATO's plans more vociferously once more. On 18 March 1997, in the build up to his summit meeting with Clinton, which he described as potentially 'the hardest in Russian-American relations', Yeltsin complained about US trade restrictions, 'the holding of NATO exercises in the Black Sea against Russia's wishes, and the "exclusion" of Russia from international organisations "because of opposition from the US", arguing that "NATO is an American organisation" reiterating opposition to NATO expansion and "ruling out" suggestions that Russia might join the alliance unless it transforms itself into a purely political organisation, and that Start-III talks could not begin until Washington and Moscow resolve their differences over the 1972 ABM treaty' (RFE/RL, 18 March 1997).

NATO was usually described by the Russian elite as an imperialistic, aggressive force that was attempting to impose a military ring around Russia. This language contrasted Western militarism with Russia's role as bearer of generous and Christian principles for the benefit of all mankind. NATO expansion was described as the key 'betrayal' by the West of Russia's magnanimous declaration of peace which ended to Cold War. While Russia retained its interest in becoming an important member of the 'civilised' world, hostility to NATO remained. In early 1997 Dmitri Riurikov[230] said that "overcoming the concept of NATO expansion eastwards will be a "major goal" of Yeltsin's foreign policy during 1997... Moscow views NATO expansion "as a kind of offense... Russia won the Cold War by doing away with military confrontation for the good of all countries"' (RFE/RL, 2 January 1997). Russian First Deputy Defence Minister Andrei Kokoshin warned that NATO could 'set off a backlash against Russian reforms if it expands... [because it is a] "historical injustice". This is the way it was seen by opponents of

[230] A foreign policy aide to Yeltsin.

reform. "We have retreated to the east and NATO is advancing, pushing us further and further east"' (RFE/RL, 5 February 1996).

The consensus on pragmatic nationalism

The gathering of elite views around a consensus reflected the manner in which debate over Russia's national identity was conducted. There were a few areas in which agreement was possible, and many disagreements remained. However, a centrist and consensual position could be reached because confrontation between Russia and the West on a 'civilizational or geopolitical basis' can 'play a stabilizing role in the evolution of the new Russian state. Under the accustomed conditions of a hostile front, it is easier to formulate and enforce a single national ideology, at the same time consolidating the authoritarian foundations of power' (Trenin, 1996: 33).

Thus NATO's exclusivity was a useful tool for the elite in building a vision of Russian identity, which resonated well with history and which also served in an attempt to bind the population against an external threat. The pragmatic realist consensus created this opportunity: it could cope with the enlargement of NATO as long as powerful and loud objections were made. The development of the national identity debate in Russia involved a balance between nationalism and pragmatism; many members of the Russian elite adopted the language of pragmatic, realistic independent foreign policy, whose keynote was hostility to NATO expansion, combined with a world-weary acceptance of the need to 'do business' with that organisation. Russian national identity did not involve a total break from the West and acceptance of Slavophile or Eurasianist ideas. It emphasised Russia's predominantly European character, and the need for Russia to have close dealings with the West. The pragmatic aspect was included in the official national identity discourse because the West remained an important part of Russian foreign policy as a necessary partner; this reflected the widely-held view among the elite that Russia was more European than Asian. Where the consensus differed most clearly from Atlanticist foreign policy was in its assessment of Russia as a unique great power whose interests should at the same time be defended. The key themes were national interests and independence.

In keeping with the pragmatic theme of Russian foreign policy thinking, many members of the elite (those in the presidential administration and in the ministries with responsibility for foreign policy) were keen to describe NATO expansion as being something more or less inevitable, and hence their role as being to make the best of a bad job. Russia's current and unfortunate weakness meant they acted on behalf of a European great power rather than a superpower, and hence there was a need for realism in relations with NATO. Solana affirmed, as if to emphasise this point, that NATO's expansion decision had been taken 'long ago' (RFE/RL, 12 March 1996).

Pragmatic realist foreign policy was in part a result of the realisation of Russia's weakness. It was NATO that forced home the message that pragmatism was necessary, given this weakness, and hence the Alliance had a powerful influence on Russian perceptions.

There was prevarication on NATO's enlargement throughout the 1990s. Kozyrev, in early 1993 for example, was still saying (while emphasising Russia's 'vital interests' in the former USSR) that 'Russia sees cooperation with NATO as an effective mechanism for overcoming the division of Europe and for mutual adaptation'. Yeltsin, on a visit to Poland in August 1993, claimed that Russia would welcome NATO enlargement to include that country and others. This was in fact hastily retracted and 'shortly afterwards the Russian government... expressed outright opposition to the Eastern and Central European states joining NATO' (Braun, 1997: 58).[231] In 1994, a high-ranking representative of the Foreign Ministry could still use the word partnership with regard to the West, albeit qualified by criticism of NATO and emphasis of Russia's importance. He added that 'naturally, Russia's partnership with NATO should be more advanced both in scope and content than that with other countries' (Kazantsev, 1994: 21-22).[232]

The official foreign policy and national security documents reflect the balanced, pragmatic view of NATO expansion which had become dominant in the

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[231] NATO itself was under pressure in the post-Soviet period and was prone to its own bureaucratic and national divisions as it tried to create a *raison d'etre*. The new political and strategic situation in Europe after the end of the Cold War meant that the Alliance 'found itself under considerable external pressure [from the central and eastern European states]... This rush of requests for admission caught NATO unprepared and thus created an embarrassment (Bebler, 1999: 49).

[232] Evgenii Kazantsev was Deputy Director of the Department of European Cooperation of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Russian elite. In 1993, NATO 'was referred to in terms of the potential for "collaboration" and "exchanges"... as an embodiment of "western values"... NATO [was regarded as]... one of the several elements of the security mechanism in Europe' (Kassianova, 2001: 835). In 1997, however, NATO was considered to be 'a source of '"division"... and implications of "unilateralness", subsequently developed by the 2000 documents into the allusion to "Western institutions as forums of *limited membership*"' (Kassianova, 2001: 835-836). In keeping with the struggle to define Russian identity, the view of NATO in these documents was clearly directed towards the desire to manage a workable relationship. The key problems of NATO expansion (confirmation of which came at the Washington summit in April 1999), intensified bombing of Iraq and actions in the former Yugoslavia, had the affect of derailing only temporarily this attempted modus vivendi which seemed to reflect Russia's own vacillation in its domestic struggle to define itself.

The language used by Primakov and many other members of Russia's elite followed from the development of the consensus on Russian identity.[233] In his first speech on accepting the job of Foreign Minister, on 12 January 1996, he argued that 'Russia was and remains a great power. Her foreign policy should correspond to that status'. He expressed a desire for reasonably friendly relations with the US, though 'we proceed from the need for an equitable... mutually beneficial partnership'. Any further expansion of NATO would disrupt this equilibrium: 'I have a negative attitude to the possible expansion of NATO. I think it is counterproductive for the stabilisation of the situation in Europe and would undoubtedly create a new geopolitical situation for Russia'.[234] In an interview with *Izvestiia* soon after his appointment, in March, he said that Moscow would '"more vigorously and effectively" defend Russia's interests, rejecting a "strategic alliance [with] former Cold War adversaries," warning that any enlargement of NATO would only encourage "a revival of the Russian military and a more assertive Russian policy in Europe." In saying that Russia's goal would also be closer

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[233] The Foreign Intelligence Service, under Primakov, had produced the report on 'Russia-CIS: Does the West's Position Need Modification?' (for details see Chapter 5). Attempts by NATO to expand would compel Moscow to review its military planning and deployments, with negative consequences for the country's internal reforms.
[234] Cited by Leighton (1996: 3).

integration of the newly independent states, he describes them as "parts of the former Soviet Union" rather than the CIS'.[235]

In its dealings with NATO under Primakov, Russia often displayed a sense of the need for compromise. In August 1996, Primakov publicly suggested compromise on NATO expansion. But conflicting messages were sent out. In late September 1996, for example, Yeltsin said that a Russia-NATO pact must precede expansion, signifying that Russia saw expansion as inevitable but hoped to influence the terms under which it occurred. However Primakov also reiterated at this time his long-standing threats to revise a 'whole series' arms control agreements if NATO were to accept new members. Again, this seemed to be aimed at influencing the possible NATO-Russia pact rather than blocking expansion. In October 1996, in an article in *Nezavisimaia Gazeta*,[236] Primakov laid out four conditions for a stable post-Cold War international order. 'Preventing "new dividing lines"; breaking the mentality of "leaders" and "led"; democratising international economic relations; coordinating cooperative action by the international community; [and] that the OSCE should lead a European security system, while conceding that NATO, the EU and UN should play important parts... Russia was ready to negotiate a special pact with NATO if necessary' (RFE/RL, 22 October 1996).

In January 1997, Aleksandr Lebed travelled in his capacity as Chairman of the Security Council to Western Europe to visit NATO headquarters. His position on expansion was 'characterized as "flexible" by Senator William Roth (president of the North Atlantic Assembly)' (RFE/RL, 21 January 1997). A major nationalist figure, Lebed demonstrated an ambivalent, pragmatic attitude towards NATO, with the explanation that expansion was inevitable, but the damage to Russia's interests should be minimised.[237]

By the mid-1990s, coinciding with NATO's increasing talk of expansion (culminating at Madrid in 1997), the consensus and the relationship with NATO can be seen to have settled into a pattern of overt hostility combined with talk of

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[235] Cited by Goble (1996).
[236] Owned by Boris Berezosvkii's LogoVAZ Industrial-Financial Group.
[237] Aleksandr Lebed had gone from folk hero after his activities as commander of the 14th Army in Moldova, to presidential candidate (coming third in the first round of the 1996 elections), and thence to his appointment as Chairman of the Security Council. He was sacked from all posts by Yeltsin in October 1996 and later became Governor of Krasnoiarsk Krai.

compromise – as long as NATO showed respect to Russia by singling it out as unique and hence a country with which NATO needed to establish a special relationship. The tone of Russian officials in 1997 did briefly become more harsh with confirmation that NATO was to accept new members. Russian Minister of Defence Sergeev,[238] for example, visited Germany on 28–29 January. He met Germany's Foreign Minister and complained that NATO expansion 'doesn't threaten anybody except Russia'. In February 1998 Russia criticised a plan to create a north-east NATO corps to be NATO's first-ever permanent military mission in central and eastern Europe. Sergeev argued that the move amounted to NATO's 'advancing toward the Russian border with weapons in its hands' (RFE/RL, 6 February 1998). But until the Kosovo conflict the general tenor of the language used remained remarkably stable.

The modified restorationism which accepted that the empire would never be restored in its entirety (although Russia should still dominate the Eurasian space) matched the pragmatic foreign policy: a strong state had to prove its worth by rebuilding Russian greatness, denying the West the spoils of an ill-gotten victory in the Cold War, forming a union with Belarus, and asserting control over the 'near abroad'.

As regards the public at large, survey results show that NATO expansion 'was both far more salient and a source of greater concern for Russian elites than it was for mass publics in 1995. In 1995, all foreign policy issues were of less concern both to elites and to mass publics than their misgivings about "the inability of Russia to resolve its internal problems"' (Zimmerman, 2001: 239). VTsIOM found inconclusive evidence in 1997. A poll in January of that year found that '50% of Russians oppose admission of former Soviet Union states to NATO and 41% say former Warsaw Treaty states shouldn't join; but 17% and 22% were indifferent to the issue of NATO membership for former Soviet Union or WTO states, respectively. Asked how Russia should defend its interests, 26% said it should not join any alliances, 22% favored cooperation with NATO, 17% said Russia should form its own alliance with other CIS states and 8% said Russia should join NATO' (RFE/RL, 21 January 1997). A recent nationwide poll by VTsIOM found that 'only 29.7% of respondents said they were "concerned" about

[238] Sergeev had taken over from Grachev after the latter's sacking in August 1997.

NATO's plans for eastward expansion, while 44.7% said they were not concerned by such plans' (RFE/RL, 20 June, 1997).

Thus, 'Russian society demonstrated a remarkably low mobilization potential [because] the overwhelming majority of Russians do not care about foreign policy. Foreign policy has always been an elite sport in Russia and this is even more the case now, given the enormous domestic problems that the country must face' (Kortunov, 1999: 23). Compared to issues such as price inflation and unemployment, NATO expansion is of limited interest. Opinion polls 'support the idea that the Russian people, while generally, if asked, voice the preference for a "strong country" or for NATO to desist from its expansion plans, also rank such matters very low on their list of priorities' (Lieven, 1995: 194).[239] Parties espousing nationalist foreign policy programmes were the most successful in successive parliamentary elections. This can partly be explained as the result of anger directed towards the disastrous reformist programme. But at the same time, the public responded to the theme of 'defending Russia's national interests'.

Russian identity in response to the challenge of NATO

The Russian riposte

Russia's attitude to NATO by the mid-1990s reflected the general trends outlined in Chapter 7. NATO was viewed by the Russian elite with the hostility combined with pragmatism that reflected the weight of opinion in the elite about Russia's relations with the West in general. This in turn was a reflection of the debates regarding Russian national identity that by 1995 had coalesced around a 'consensus' on the need for a strong independent Eurasian state.

NATO created a specific challenge for Russian foreign policy however, because of its promised enlargement into central and eastern Europe. Such an expansion was clearly not going to include Russia and there would be no equal partnership Moreover, NATO had in the post-Cold War years begun to describe itself as a force for the spread of democracy: 'ostensibly a defence alliance... NATO has now attempted to sell itself as a political-security structure, in some

[239] See also Shlapentokh (2000: 182).

ways competing with the EU on the political front with its avowed agenda of state building and the promotion of liberal democracy' (Sanford, 1999: 92).[240] The reaction in Russia was to 'retreat to an old role – that of a strategic nation-state trying to maximise its national interest in keeping its former allies from becoming allied to NATO [but] this role was denied to it by NATO's new self-identification as a "democratic security community"' (Williams & Neumann, 2000: 361-362). Thus 'the oft-noted vacillations in Russian NATO policy in the first half of the 1990s... are explained by NATO's power to specify the roles which Russia could legitimately adopt and the unease of the Russian leadership in coming to terms with conducting a policy predicated on these terms' (Williams & Neumann, 2000: 361-362). The Communist Party's 'principal thinker on foreign policy and Vice Chairman of the Duma Committee on International Affairs, Aleksey Podberezkin, [understood that] "the first holds that Russia's national security points out a separate path for the country"... another approach is oriented towards bringing western values to Russia and towards her joining "the family of civilized nations" at any price, because, as official policy tells us, there are no alternatives to this "joining"' (Williams & Neumann, 2000: 377-378).

An examination of Russian foreign policy statements, however, shows that Russia did manage to come up with a riposte in kind, which was partly about building a new identity for the nation and partly about combating NATO's ambitious new claims. It developed in reaction to the challenge presented by NATO, but was based on historical national identity models. The Russian leadership began to describe NATO itself as less than civilised, as a threat to peace – and Russia as the defender of civilised values. In other words, Russia was no longer *with* NATO as a global defender of civilisation (as in the honeymoon phase), but *against,* and *superior to* NATO as the defender of civilisation. In 1998, in a discussion of the possibility of Russia joining NATO, Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov argued that it would be unthinkable: 'just as I see no prospect of Russia joining the European Union... if Russia were to join these organizations would cease to be what they are. Our country is too great, the Russian scale of things... is too expansive. Neither NATO nor the EU could simply remain as they were' (*Summary of World Broadcasts,* 29 October 1998).

[240] See also *The Spectator*, 25 November 2000.

Russia was thus cast in the role familiar throughout the past two centuries as a force for morality counterposed to the often venal and militaristic West. The vision of Russian national identity dominant among the elite from the mid-1990s allowed the foreign policy-makers to create this counter to NATO's moves. This role was subsumed to the general pragmatic nationalist vision in which independent Russia was obliged to deal with the West, and competed with the other visions of Russian identity which struggled for supremacy in the 1990s; but it allowed the Russian leadership to seize the moral high ground when it was necessary to salvage dignity in the face of NATO's overwhelming power and their diplomatic impotence.

The Russian elite's response to NATO's new interest in peacemaking in the former Yugoslavia was therefore to suggest that by acting 'unilaterally', NATO was a threat to European and world peace. The latter was being upheld by Russia. This was often part of wider Russian complaints about the creation of a dangerous, 'unipolar' world order. Yeltsin's speech to the UN General Assembly 50th Jubilee Session (22 October 1995), for example, contained many references to a system of security in Europe that is for 'the whole of Europe, or, as was the case previously, one that is only for some. The strengthening of one bloc today will mean the beginning of new confrontation tomorrow. That is not the way to build a just world order. Such an order has to be based on different principles. Russia is for a world order in which priority is given to international law and international cooperation... in which a steady movement toward peace is guaranteed, free of weapons of mass destruction, and in which the role of the United Nations will grow, as an instrument for achieving peace, resolving conflict, and providing aid for development'.[241]

Such arguments could be adapted for use against the US and its allies even when NATO itself was not strictly involved. In December 1998, following bombings in Iraq, the Duma adopted a statement by a huge majority (394 votes in favour, one against and two abstentions; and supported by the Foreign Minister, Ivanov) that the parliament 'resolutely condemns "the barbaric bombing of the Republic of Iraq, carried out by the USA and Great Britain without the authorization of the UN Security Council"... Primakov rejected [Al Gore's]... arguments for airstrikes [against Iraq] telling him that "Russia unequivocally

[241] Cited in *Russia and Eurasia Documents*, 1995: 255.

condemns the American and British military action and regards it as a crude violation of the relevant resolutions of the UN Security Council, the UN Charter and the universally recognized principles of international law"... According to Primakov, the Anglo-American action against Iraq "infringes the whole of the world legal order that has been established since the second world war and undermines the efforts and authority of the UN Security Council"' (*Summary of World Broadcasts,* 19 December 1998).

Another way in which the Russian leadership managed to portray Russia as being morally superior to NATO was by means of the emphasis on Russia's role in ending the Cold War, which could be described as a unilateral action taken for the benefit of all. The logical next step for humanity would be a world in which dividing lines were removed and a multipolar world order established rather than a unipolar order led by the United States. As Minister of Defence Sergeev put it, 'On the threshold of the 21st century, we have rid the world community of a heavy burden – the global confrontation between two opposing political systems. In its place, a new process has begun, one of transition to a multipolar world order in which there is a growing variety of political, economic and cultural developments in states and nations... Today it is an established fact that Russia and NATO do not regard each other as adversaries... [but] In spite of the fact that the line of military confrontation between the two blocs has been erased from the map of Europe, there are still forces striving to create new dividing lines on the continent' (Sergeev, 1998: 16). The PJC, Sergeev argued, 'may provide a favourable basis for extending cooperation and for arriving at mutually acceptable solutions to existing problems between Russia and NATO. However, there are fears that these arrangements may not be implemented in full. These fears would be justified if Russia's role in the Permanent Joint Council was arbitrarily restricted. Russia cannot remain passive in response to NATO's eastward expansion... the implementation of these plans, in their present form, could be a destabilising factor in contemporary international relations.... [the new] security architecture should be based on the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe ... the only organisation on the continent that fully reflects the interests of all participating states in its activities and ensures all have equal rights, irrespective of their membership of various unions and alliances' (Sergeev, 1998: 18).

Kosovo and a unipolar world

The actions by NATO in Kosovo brought about the low-point in Russia-NATO relations. It also brought home to the Russian elite the fact that the PJC would not fulfil the role they had hoped it would, because Russia had not been consulted on the decision to use force. The Communist faction in the Duma took up the cause of 'brother Slavs, Christians as its own. Fiery speeches were made about the unity of the Slavic and Christian peoples' (Brovkin, 1999: 21). The Communists managed to put Yeltsin on the defensive. 'He could not comfortably explain why Russia was inactive when its "brothers" were being systematically bombed into the ground. The only explanation that came to mind was Russia's weakness, which the opposition claimed was the result of Yeltsin's pro-Western policy. The salvation for Russia, so the argument went, was not to seek favors from the West... not to swallow insults but to show that it still was a power to be reckoned with. Russia had to show to the world that no European problem could be resolved without her. This was the official line of the Russian President echoed in stronger terms by the Communists and Nationalists... When TV stations reported from Belgrade day after day about NATO bombing raids and destroyed bridges, hospitals and apartment blocs, showing hundreds of thousands of refugees supposedly on the run because of NATO bombing, it was hard in such an atmosphere to defend NATO actions in Russia' (Brovkin, 1999: 20).

Kosovo seemed to show what the future held for a US-led, unipolar world. Yeltsin himself said that 'the Russian President warns NATO not to "push [Russia] towards military action. Otherwise there will be a minimum of a European or maybe even a world war, which must not be permitted"' (RFE/RL, 12 April 1999). The crisis 'drew together all the political forces in Russia (except the marginal politicians)' (Fedorov, 1999: 51). During interviews with the foreign policy elite in September 1999, 'interlocutors across the political spectrum condemned the airstrikes against Serbia, disapproved of NATO expansion, and argued that the new strategic doctrine undermined Russian security. Focus group discussions confirmed that Kosovo had made a deep and negative impression on people at all levels of society' (Light at al., 2000a: 5). In a nation-wide poll on 27–30 March 1999, '90 per cent of respondents said that NATO had no right to bomb Yugoslavia without

the approval of the UN Security Council. A year later, 56 per cent of respondents believed that NATO is an aggressive alliance, while only 17 per cent regarded it as an alliance for defence' (Light et al., 2000b: 494).

During the period when activity in Kosovo was heating up on the road towards military conflict, there was a flurry of comments on the theme of NATO as a threat to civilisation. On meeting Kofi Annan in March 1998, Yeltsin stressed the UN's role in establishing a multipolar world order (*Summary of World Broadcasts,* 1 April 1998). Two months later, the Minister of Defence, Sergeev, in Brussels to attend the PJC and Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council[242] and for meetings with NATO ministers, stressed that "the use of military force is possible only after a political decision and only under the aegis of the UN Security Council' (*Summary of World Broadcasts,* 11 June 1998). The same day Yeltsin stated bluntly that Russia-NATO relations '"remain frozen; we will see later what happens", while an unidentified Foreign Ministry official told Interfax that the announced pause in NATO air strikes against Yugoslavia is not a justification for a renewal of relations with NATO... the "Russia-NATO founding act will need rethinking" he said. Anonymous Ministry of Defence sources said renewing relations with NATO "is not on our list of priorities now"' (RFE/RL, 12 June 1999).

The point was repeated by Foreign Ministry spokesman Vladimir Rakhmanin[243] the following day, and a week later the Russian attaché to NATO headquarters, Colonel-General Leonid Ivashov,[244] said that 'if NATO "resorts to any violent action to resolve the Kosovo conflict without the sanction of the UN Security Council, this would be the start of a new Cold War in Europe and will determine Russia's conduct... the military means is the thousand-and-first [means of settling the conflict]. But a decision of the UN Security Council is needed to make use of it" (*Summary of World Broadcasts,* 20 June 1998).

In June 1999, Russia and China also issued a joint communiqué condemning the 'barbarous' bombing of Yugoslavia; at the G8 summit of June 1999, Yeltsin talked of spreading democracy in international relations. High-ranking officials in the Foreign Ministry added to the furore. Aleksandr Matveyev

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[242] The EAPC had replaced the North Atlantic Cooperation Council in 1997.
[243] Spokesman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
[244] Head of the Defense Ministry's Main Department for International Military Cooperation.

(1999: 53),[245] for example, suggested that NATO's war in Yugoslavia 'manifested in a most graphic manner the new nature of the political system existing on this planet. Lying in ruins are the foundations of international law and political trust... Based on the UN Charter, the international law proved too narrow to contain the global aspirations animating the new Goliath. Like many centuries ago, force is again the only criterion of importance of states and their spiritual values. Substitution of stone arrowheads for Tomahawks makes little change' (Matveyev, 1999: 53). Americans, he suggested, see themselves as natural rulers of the world, as 'the best, the most perfect, the strongest, the incomparably more humane and understanding. They stand taller than others, they are above others' (Matveyev, 1999: 56). And in the end, NATO is nothing more than 'a bridle for Europe and a tool of intimidation hanging over many countries from Yugoslavia to Brazil' (Matveyev, 1999: 59).

Nezavisimaia Gazeta (25 March 1999) pointed out the differences between Russia and the US, and in particular how, 'The NATO bloc took Europe to war'. 'Waking up on Wednesday morning the Europeans learnt that during the night... Solana considered that "all efforts for reaching a political agreement of the Kosovo crisis through negotiations have collapsed and there is no alternative left but to take military action". From this moment the destiny of Europe was delivered by Solana into the hands of American general Wesley Clarke... it was agreed to perpetrate an aggression against a sovereign state bypassing the system worked out by the international community after the Second World War (see Chapter Seven of the UN Charter).'

Krasnaia Zvezda, which up to then had usually adopted a reasonably straightforward and businesslike tone regarding NATO and the West, on 3 April 1999 described the bombings as 'barbarian... the general picture after the daily bombings... can be expressed in two words: death and hunger... NATO bombings have provoked a massive exodus... UNHCR experts consider that "in circumstances of a humanitarian disaster caused by NATO, hundreds of thousands of people could still leave Kosovo"' on top of those thousands already driven out. Meanwhile, the leader of the Kosovo Albanians, Ibrahim Rugova, was said to have declared that the bombings should stop, 'completely undermin[ing] NATO's

[245] Adviser at the Russian Federation's Permanent Mission to the OSCE.

attempts to try on the full-dress uniform of the "Balkan peacemaker"'. The newspaper also mentioned fears voiced by the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the possibility of a serious environmental disaster.

Interviewed in June 1999, Colonel-General Ivashov argued that 'The US did more than any other country to trigger the war in the Balkans, and Russia did more than any other country to bring it to a close. The military action in Yugoslavia was an example of open aggression against a sovereign state... the fact that a new world order has been established represents a defeat for Russia and for the whole world community. What we have allowed to emerge is a one-polar world, where one country or group of countries can impose their will on others and when, in the name of peace, entire countries can be transformed into ruins and people die.... Unless we learn the lessons from what has just happened, it could well be that the bombing of Yugoslavia was only a beginning – the beginning of a new re-division of the world through the use of force. If force can be used to make peace between Serbs and Albanians, then where's the guarantee that NATO, acting with the noblest of intentions, won't decide to use force to reconcile North and South Korea, Taiwan and China, to bring democracy to Belarus, Iraq and Syria? ... for over two months, NATO was able to use the Balkans as a testing ground for new forms of warfare'. His colleague, General Viktor Kazantsev suggested that 'further shifts in the policy pursued by the North Atlantic Alliance have been in many respects the consequence of Russia's string of initiatives on issues of European organization, its firmly negative position on plans for NATO expansion, and demands to take into consideration the legitimate concerns of the Russian side in connection with the possible emergence of the NATO military machine on Russian borders' (Kazantsev, 1999: 23).[246]

Writing after the accession of new members and the Kosovo conflict, *Izvestiia* (27 April 1999) described NATO's 50th anniversary celebrations in cynical terms a long way from those the newspaper was using in 1992: 'NATO's super summit carried out its work under the stilted rhetoric of Washington and the deafening sound of exploding bombs in Yugoslavia. One can wonder if Solana's new strategic concept of NATO is democratic... The NATO summit took place under the sign of NATO's expansionism and enlargement to the east'.

[246] General Kazantsev would go on to head the military campaign in Chechnya in 1999.

Thus the Russian elite and media adapted a worldview which had developed over the decade to counteract NATO's own claims to be defending humanitarian values in the former Yugoslavia.[247] Perhaps, 'the key to understanding Russia's policy on [Kosovo]... is realizing that it is only remotely related to the conflict itself. Russia's policy in post-Cold War European conflicts can only be understood through the prism of Moscow's complicated relations with the North Atlantic Alliance and bitter opposition to the process of NATO expansion... Moscow still views NATO as a weapon aimed primarily at Russia, and NATO expansion as a hedge against any "future revival" of Russian power' (Stepanova 1999: 2).

More than any other action by NATO, that which transpired in Kosovo seemed to suggest all that was wrong with enlargement, and what, despite its pragmatism, Russia stood to fear from it. Andrei Fedorov claimed that 'the war against Yugoslavia has done Russia at least one favor: many people, including those placed high enough, grew disappointed with the West as a strategic partner. It has been obviously taking Russia into account to the extent it sets itself. It is for Russia to shape her foreign policy herself once more that would rely on her idea of the world and her possibilities' (Fedorov, 1999: 47).[248] The military action placed 'Russian perceptions [under]... severe strain... The US and NATO were striving to acquire world hegemony... Not so much the substance of the new NATO polices as the style, the pompous omnipotence, and the demonstration of disregard to Russia's views and the fanfare of the fiftieth NATO anniversary tended to alienate Russia' (Brovkin, 1999: 2). General Lebed proposed at the Federation Council to declare Yugoslavia a zone of Russia's geopolitical interests. Russia was to oppose NATO aggression and provide military assistance to Yugoslavia. 'According to Lebed Russia in the role of a fighter would consolidate [Russia's] dignity and unify the nation.' (Brovkin, 1999: 16).

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[247] Coverage of the conflict in Russia generally demonstrated that the Russian media 'essentially reproduced Serbian propaganda lines and footage. Refugees were fleeing American bombing. Hundreds of thousands of refugees were the result of NATO bombing. This was repeated day after day... This was an example of the Soviet era manipulation of the media. The difference with the Soviet times was that then people were in the habit of disbelieving official propaganda. Now... propaganda lies were perceived as true coverage' (Brovkin, 1999: 2-3).

[248] Fedorov was President of the Political Research Foundation and Director of Political Programs at the Foreign and Defense Policy Council.

After Kosovo: a return to stability

Russia's elite described their country as a moral force faced with a physically powerful but immoral West. NATO represented the West's physical strength, potential for violence and lack of spirituality, but in other ways Russian national identity was closer to the West than to 'Asia'. Russia was still European and needed to retain its links with the West. Russia's duty was to show the West – notably the US – where it was going wrong. Aleksandr Avdeev,[249] while claiming that Moscow did not expect a return to the Cold War and categorically denying "any anti-US direction in our politics" argued at the same time that 'Moscow not only doesn't accept but "openly opposes" the West's efforts at a unipolar world and the "dissolution of separate but extremely important principles and norms of international law"' (RFE/RL, 18 November, 1999). The Russian elite managed to claim some success as a result of these criticisms, taking credit for the fact that, by the end of the decade, 'Russia no longer considers NATO enlargement to be a menace because the alliance has undergone a radical transformation from a Cold War instrument to a defence against global terrorism and other 21st-century threats' (Binyon, 2002). Russia had become a great power, a leader of the multipolar challenge to the US.

These arguments allowed the Russian leaders to deflect any hint of humiliation at their inability to influence the course of the Kosovo conflict. The voices of 'pragmatism' were audible once more soon after the end of the fighting in Kosovo. Sergei Stepashin, at that time Prime Minister, stated plainly that the 'sufferings of Yugoslavia's population was caused not only by NATO bombings "but chiefly by the regime of Slobodan Milosevic"' (RFE/RL, 2 August 1999). Little by little their voices began to be heard ever more loudly. General Boris Gromov, for example, with a reputation as a tough 'patriot' and a veteran of resistance to Yeltsin in 1993, 'voiced the opinion echoing that of [Yeltsin] and of the "patriots" [that] the policy of Russia must be principled and firm. We will not accept NATO in the role of the World's policeman"' (Brovkin, 1999: 16). However, he added, 'providing military assistance to Yugoslavia would imply a return to the Cold War, which was unacceptable' (Brovkin, 1999: 16). In mid-September 1999, the US Secretary of State, William Cohen, said that agreement on

[249] Deputy Foreign Minister (1996–1998), then First Deputy Foreign Minister (1998–2002).

rewriting the ABM treaty was possible after a cordial meeting with Sergeev. Sergeev was more reticent but indicated that Moscow wanted to improve military relations with the US – even though he was still critical of NATO actions in Kosovo. First Deputy Foreign Minister Aleksandr Avdeev, meanwhile, stated that Moscow did not expect to return to the Cold War. He 'categorically denied any anti-US direction in our politics', but he added that Moscow not only did not accept but openly opposed the West's efforts to create a unipolar world and the 'dissolution of separate but extremely important principles and norms of international law'.

Relations between Russia and NATO quickly returned to those prevailing in the mid-1990s. *Izvestiia* (29 September 1999) suggested, in the wake of a visit by Canada's Prime Minister and with regard to the Chechen conflict, that 'Russian diplomacy can now breathe freely: the reaction of the Canadian minister is favourable. The West is on our side. The world is ready to accept the version of events given by official figures in Moscow... It isn't the first time that the west has shown extreme delicacy in relation to the Kremlin's actions in the north Caucasus. Five years ago when the "first Chechen war" started, the members of the G7 had also distanced themselves from public criticism... Of course, the situation was different at the time: there was no Kosovo, no default [referring to the August 1998 financial crisis], no anti-West hysteria which politicians are expressing now, but this is the first time we've received total support from the West... The West again expressed its loyalty to Moscow, and in this way reiterated the fact that in the fight against terrorism and Islamist extremism and aggressive separatism. We are in the same camp. We are part of one civilised and democratic world.'

The speed with which relations reverted to a position of grudging pragmatic acceptance of reality and lost their vitriol is instructive and provides support to the argument that a relatively well-established and widely accepted vision of Russian national identity was held by Russia's elite. It meant that relations with the outside world were reasonably stable, despite shocks such as that inflicted by NATO in Kosovo. Thus Yeltsin's policies 'have more to do with such an outcome of debate on NATO expansion in Russia than with NATO expansion itself... He had chosen to distance himself from NATO and yet to conclude Partnership for Peace, to embrace nationalist rhetoric... Most definitely [he] was manoeuvring between

contradictory policies which he himself so eloquently expressed in July 1999 that Russia would not quarrel with NATO too much but would not be too friendly either' (Brovkin, 1999: 40). Once the Kosovo furore had settled down, Russia settled into a role with which it was confident – a great power but not superpower. Prime Minister Putin contended that 'Russia should be and will be an integral part of the civilized world and in this context we will cooperate with NATO'. However, referring to the former Yugoslavia, he added, 'we have geopolitical interests and we will stand up for them'.[250]

NATO had played a pivotal role in changing perceptions among the Russian leadership. The policies of expansion and out-of-area operations had been a snub to Russia. But the development of pragmatic nationalism had countered this situation and created a regional great power role for Russia which also stood up for a multipolar world against NATO's unipolar aspirations. This took some time, because 'the Yeltsin period was partly about the old generation. Their cultural background lay in the Soviet period, and they had been subject to propaganda all their lives. Culture can only evolve slowly – a revolution is not possible'.[251]

The 2000 Foreign Policy Concept was notable partly for the predominance of a pragmatic nationalist tone and the impression given that Russia's foreign policy was by now a fairly settled one, 'predetermined by the geopolitical position of Russia as one of the largest Eurasian powers,' and the need to balance 'objectives and the possibilities for attaining those objectives'.[252] Western institutions are in fact referred only to in the document in rather negative terms, as 'forums of limited membership' partly to blame for the 'negative tendencies' in Russia's international situation referred to in paragraph 3 of the document. 'Integration processes, in particular, in the Euro-Atlantic region are quite often pursued on a selective and limited basis', the document goes on to lament.[253] There is a rather mild suggestion that 'on a number of parameters, NATO's present-day political and military guidelines do not coincide with security interests of the

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[250] Cited in RFE/RL, 16 August 1999.
[251] Tatiana Parkhalina interviewed by the author, Moscow, 12 July 2002. Her argument was that in the Soviet period, 'anti-Western propaganda was used to justify the Soviet system that knew it couldn't compete on equal terms (owing to a lack of sophistication): i.e. the West as evil was a necessary other. But this meant that a certain generation grew up with this idea implanted.'
[252] *Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation*, 2000: paragraphs 28 and 29.
[253] *Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation*, 2000: paragraph 21.

Russian Federation'.[254] As Ivanov argued, 'What is most innovative about the 2000 foreign policy doctrine is its realism. Our foreign policy priorities are now more closely linked than before to the long-term tasks of internal development and are more in keeping with Russia's real possibilities and resources' (Ivanov, 2000: paragraph 2).

[254] *Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation*, 2000: paragraph 83.

CHAPTER 9
THE EU AND RUSSIA:
THE CONSTRUCTIVIST EXPLANATION

NATO was a high-profile foreign policy priority for Russia and had a strong influence on the way Russian foreign policy developed over the decade. The Alliance heavily influenced Russia's domestic political debate and the manner in which the Russian elite came to view the West. At the same time, for most of the 1990s, the great majority of the Russian elite showed little interest in the EU and there was scant recognition of its potential significance. Relations between Russia and the EU were generally smooth and low-key, although some areas of contention arose as the decade progressed. In Chapter 6 an explanation was sought in the international distribution of material power. This chapter will examine how the changing vision of Russian national identity among Russia's elite influenced perceptions of the EU and its significance (or lack of it), and how interactions between the EU and Russia in turn influenced the domestic identity debate.

Russia and the EU – a low-key relationship

The Atlanticist period

In contrast to NATO, the EU rarely featured in Russian public discourse. The Russian elite demonstrated a lack of interest – or even knowledge of – the organisation. Very few references were made to the Union in public forums. When referred to, the EU was described positively, in terms of 'partnership'. Yeltsin declared in late 1993, for example, that 'he saw Russia as being ready to "become a real partner of Western Europe"' (RFE/RL, 10 December 1993).[255] However,

[255] He was still describing the relationship between the EU and Russia as a 'partnership' in March 1997.

Russia's official view generally appeared to lie somewhere between uninterested and neutral – at least for the early part of the decade.[256]

In the early 1990s, Russian political leaders had only a very vague knowledge of the EU and its potential. Moscow 'lacked a tradition of dealing with Brussels' (Malgin, 2001: paragraph 21) despite the fact that 'the Soviet leadership realised that the European Communities were a real political force... Gorbachev's "new political thinking", with its stress on Europe, led the Soviet Union to sign the 1989 agreement that was, to some extent, an act of official recognition of the EC as a political actor and a Soviet counterpart on the world scene. After 1991 the new Russian elite lost track of this preceding logic in its dealings with Western Europe... These were liberals, but US-centred liberals... It was ideologically easier for the new generation to deal with the USA than with Europe' (Malgin, 2001: paragraph 21).[257] It was 'ideologically easier' because the US was, in the somewhat simplistic foreign policy of the time, the Westernising elite's most important point of reference. In their formulation, the West meant the US. The EU, in contrast, was taken for granted.

The almost exclusive focus on the US was also an indication of how, just after the end of the Soviet Union's existence, some members of Russia's elite still saw their country's importance as being on a par with the US. 'The top political leaders of Russia who consider relations with the United States their foreign policy priority are obviously entertaining illusions of their country's great power status' (Inozemtsev, 2002: 130), despite the leadership's adoption of an overtly humble attitude in international relations. The explanation may ultimately lie in the novelty of the situation and the lack of time in which to contemplate the implications of the Westernising course. It was also caused by a 'lack of prominent foreign policy experts among the founders of Yeltsin's regime [which] made it follow a simplistic

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[256] See, for example, Malgin (2001: paragraph 20); Artem Malgin is Deputy Director of the Post-Soviet Studies Centre at MGIMO University, Moscow.

[257] A similar analysis comes from Lo (2002: 44) who argues that, 'there was a palpable tension in liberal thinking between an inclination towards a European cultural-historical heritage on the one hand, and over fifty years of superpower tradition in which America had been the dominant "other". Intellectually and emotionally, the liberal foreign policy leant towards Europeanization and "partnership" with Western European institutions and processes; instinctually, however, any so-called liberals found it hard to escape from the Americacentrism that had informed their political upbringing'.

Russia/West scenario, with Washington as the only counterpart (Malgin, 2001: paragraph 21).[258]

A further reason for the lack of interest in the EU was that while the US (and NATO) had been, as a powerful military force, the Cold War enemy of the Soviet Union, the EU was an economic and political organisation without a history of enmity towards Moscow – despite the overlap in membership with NATO. As Yeltsin put it, referring to Europe as distinct from the US, 'We all have unfortunate experience of the Cold War' (RFE/RL, 10 December 1993). While the US went from superpower rival to most important partner, and then bête noire of Russia's nationalists, the EU did not present the same challenges to Russia's sense of its new place in the world. It was also a result of the fact that most Russians regarded themselves as in some way European, even if this was just one aspect of a Eurasian identity. Some nationalists regarded Russia as spiritually superior to Western Europe, but nevertheless as forming part of European civilisation. Yeltsin was able to declare in late 1993 that '"We are all Europeans" (RFE/RL, 10 December 1993), but it would have been impossible to describe Russia as being part of the transatlantic civilisation represented by the US and NATO. The Atlanticist view of Russia, which tried to connect Russia very closely to the US, collapsed to a certain extent as a result: Russians would never see themselves as American. In the end, perhaps, Russian 'society could not accept friendship with the US'.[259]

In the early period then, when the focus was on the US, Europe was regarded positively, even as a 'partner', but with a large degree of indifference. The result was that by 'focusing its attention initially on the United States, Russia has in a certain sense "missed out" on Europe. Under these conditions, forces not interested in rapprochement with Russia assumed a higher profile in Europe, and so Russia is being excluded from Europe' (Trenin, 1996: 31). This also led to the situation whereby, despite vociferous appeals against NATO enlargement to include former Soviet republics, 'the Baltic states' drive to join the EU was given

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[258] Eggert's (1997: 10-15) view was that 'drawing "spheres of influence" is the favourite pastime of many influential Russian politicians. They are completely oblivious to ideas of global markets with their ever increasing competitiveness, and planetary communications networks, which make geographic distinctions less and less relevant. It's only too natural that in such schemes, based on a somewhat Stalinesque perception of the world, Europe as a whole barely figures at all. Such are the roots of "Euro-ignorance"'.

[259] Konstantin Eggert, interviewed by the author, 5 December 2002.

quick and almost casual Kremlin approval in advance, where nobody... has yet tried to calculate the pluses and minuses of such a move for Russia itself. Moscow may well miss the European train just because it prefers not to notice that it's coming'.[260]

The rise of pragmatic nationalism and the EU

In the shift from Atlanticism towards the pragmatic nationalist view of Russia as an independent, Eurasian great power, NATO played a prominent role, strongly influencing the way in which relations with the West faltered and then turned sour. Yet in this case 'the West' meant NATO and its leading light the US, and did not include the EU. The 'urge to portray Russia as a victim of Western betrayal was so strong that the real implications of EU enlargement were overlooked'. This 'derived from the identity crisis of Russia', which was focused on the military alliance's enlargement.

The EU played little part in the end of the 'honeymoon with the West' and the rise of pragmatic nationalism. Russia's elite did not even challenge the EU's eastward enlargement, whereas clearly it seemed vitally important to them to play the role of defender of Russian national interests by resisting NATO expansion. The North Atlantic Alliance's plans for enlargement were perceived in Russia as posing a threat to the country's security. The EU's enlargement plans, on the other hand, were often regarded positively, whether by comparison with those of NATO, or on their own merits. Primakov noted in late February 1997, for example, that EU expansion would be a positive development. On 3 March 1997, Yeltsin and EU leaders Wim Kok and Jacques Santer discussed trade issues in Moscow. Afterwards Yeltsin declared that the 'partnership' between Russia and the EU was the 'key to strengthening security and stability on the continent'. He added that 'the 1994 EU-Russian partnership accord which awaits ratification in several countries should go into effect in the summer. Kok noted that while Yeltsin reiterated Russia's opposition to NATO expansion, he did not oppose the EU's parallel plans to expand into eastern Europe' (RFE/RL, 4 March 1997).[261] Perhaps it was the case that European aspirations even with regard to the former Soviet Union 'are viewed

[260] This and the following quotation from Konstantin Eggert, interviewed by the author, 5 December 2002.
[261] For more examples, see Chapter 6.

not as an increasingly important factor of regional realpolitik but as an amusing curiosity' (Eggert, 1997: paragraph 9).

As a result of this continuing neglect, Brussels was 'the real initiator' of relations between Russia and the EU' (Malgin, 2001: paragraph 23). Later in the decade, when the EU did become more significant to the Russian elite, Russia sought to have a say in enlargement, while not opposing the principle. In August 1999, for example, the Russian official responsible for working with the G8 (Aleksandr Livshits) made this point, adding that the Russian side wished to ensure that nothing would be done to 'make anything worse for Russia'. The point was that EU enlargement would include countries that 'have historically served as major markets for Russia'. Livshits added that it was acknowledged in Western capitals that 'there is a problem', if expansion were to proceed in ways that failed to take Moscow's concerns into account.[262]

The EU and NATO both developed similar criteria for membership: the accession criteria set out at the Copenhagen European Council in 1993 and the Madrid European Council of 1995 included political and economic factors: among the former were respect for human rights and protection of minorities, treatment of women and children, the strengthening of judicial systems and reduced corruption; economic criteria included development of a market economy and the capacity for such an economy to flourish within the Union. Both the EU and NATO, 'while opening their doors for the Eastern European nations, put off Russia's admission for the future' (Pichugin, 1996: 95). It would appear strange, then, that the EU's exclusion of Russia was so long in drawing a response, although a muted response did come in the end. The constructivist explanation does not account very well for the initial lack of interest shown by Russia in the EU, particularly once expansion was tabled.

The EU's attempt to develop a defence capability

The EU raised the possibility of founding a purely European army during the 1990s, through the reinvigoration of the Western European Union (WEU), and later

[262] Cited in NUPI *Chronology*, 23 August 1999.

by means of the European Security and Defence Identity (ESDI).[263] This aspect of the EU's changing character also did not arouse controversy in Russia, despite the fact that it meant that the EU would become a military alliance (in a close relationship with NATO) that would soon be expanding to Russia's borders. In the view of the Russian elite, the EU still did not pose a threat. It was clearly seen as either lacking military threat or hostile intentions, or as an opportunity to undermine NATO's coherence.

If anything, the EU's development of a military role was regarded positively. *Izvestiia* commented, on talk of the creation of an EU army, that 'a good thing is that it would create an independent defence structure independent from the US. If it was to be pan-European then Russia could not be ignored' (*Izvestiia*, 16 November 1999). The Russian leadership seemed to feel that Russia's importance as a European power would mean it would automatically be given higher status in any purely European developments as opposed to those under the influence of the US (it was also seen at first as an alternative and possible counterweight to NATO). Again, the nonchalant attitude among Russia's elite resulted partly from an inherent confidence in Russia's importance in Europe. Thus 'the decision taken at the Cologne European Council to expand the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) made little impression in Russia. Even when asked directly in September about what the implications would be for Russia, the foreign policy elite revealed little awareness of the EU's intention to develop a military capacity. No alarm was expressed. Foreign Ministry officials directly concerned with relations with the EU were better informed, but in September 1999 they seemed preoccupied by the consequences of exclusion to Russia's economic security, particularly in relation to the EU' (Light et al., 2000a: 8).

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[263] This came to a head in 1999, when 'The Europeans in the European Union Treaty concluded in Maastricht have reaffirmed their goal of [ESDI, which would be part of but apart from NATO], and at its Summit in April 1999 NATO and the US endorsed that goal. ESDI would give strength to another European aspiration: the search for a Common Foreign and Security Policy' (*European Security*, 2000: paragraph 1). Kosovo had been a 'wake-up call' to the EU, making it accelerate the creation of the ESDP machinery outlined in the Maastricht and Amsterdam Treaties (Malgin: paragraph 24).

Points of contention

While it was true that the Russian elite generally demonstrated a complacent attitude towards the EU, certain issues gradually pushed relations higher up the agenda, and it was economic security that was the most important of these issues. But such points of contention, though occasionally heated, were generally dealt with quickly and without fuss. The EU's enlargement and exclusion of Russia developed into a serious issue in the mid-1990s, for example, but despite presenting similar challenges to those posed by NATO's expansion, were dealt with in a discreet manner.

The EU's enlargement, like that of NATO, was often described as involving the spread of democracy and membership as requiring full democratic credentials – in the liberal Western tradition. Like NATO, the EU excluded Russia from the process. The EU, like NATO, never considered Russia as potentially a full member. The EU Trade Commissioner stated in 1996, for example, that 'Europe has a vital geopolitical role. The biggest threats to international security and stability – Russia, the Balkans and the Middle East – are all on Europe's doorstep' (Brittan, 1996: 2). Russia, once again, is on the doorstep, but not fully a part of, true 'Europe'. Exclusion from the EU was similar to that of NATO in the manner in which the EU constructed its own post-Cold War identity – and that of potential members.

Some foreign policy experts in Russia did recognise the significance of statements such as these. Vladimir Lukin, for example, criticized the EU for putting up 'civilizational' as well as economic barriers to Russia.[264] The criticism by the EU of Russian activities in Chechnya, the Kaliningrad issue, EU support for NATO action in Kosovo and others also occasionally raised the profile of the EU and sometimes registered among Russians. Hence the criticism that the EU 'makes meaningless statements about 'Greater Europe', but is putting up barriers, so that 'after the upcoming expansion becomes reality, the EU will put up impenetrable barriers on its new frontiers. The motive of this shortsighted policy is this: Russia, staying behind the fence we have erected around our fold, must protect us against all dangerous winds blowing from the east and southeast'. Russia was obliged to provide security and energy guarantees for Europe 'in exchange for cordial words

[264] Cited in *Moscow Times* (online), 27 February 2005. Online at http: new.mn.ru english/issue.php.

that do not imply any real participation in all-European affairs. The Russian community in Europe has the status of a ghetto. A ghetto always presents danger – to itself as well as those living around it'.[265] This styling of Russia as an unthanked bastion against eastern threats is a familiar one, but used in this example with regard to the EU demonstrates the potential for construction of the EU in such a negative manner. However, statements along these lines were to remain rare, even with respect to the various areas of disagreement that arose between the EU and Russia.

Physical exclusion

The issue of exclusion persisted as a possible thorn in the side of EU–Russia relations. Kaliningrad became an important issue once the EU had confirmed its intention to welcome new members among states whose membership would lead to Kaliningrad being cut off from the rest of the Russian Federation. Given the importance attached by the Russian elite to the problems of borders and Russian populations stranded outside the country, this was not surprising. The 'irredenta' became a *cause célèbre* for the Russian elite in its turn away from 'romantic' foreign policy: Kaliningrad's isolation within the EU would place a group of Russians not only outside the state's borders, but cut off from the Motherland by states which had been admitted to the European club, including the Baltics, which for Russia were the most sensitive area for NATO expansion. Yet under Yeltsin the administration raised few objections. Later, what Malgin (2001: paragraph 27) called 'older Russian "strategic" concerns about the enclave, inspired by the military lobby [and others holding to the nationalist view], have nearly disappeared, but real problems are still there... Certainly, the Kaliningrad problem will be the subject of further multilateral and bilateral consultations and agreements. However, we already have a mechanism that could help solve this problem. It is the "Northern Dimension" initiative. This multifaceted and multilateral project... [is] also a model for further transborder co-operation'.[266]

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[265] Cited in *Moscow Times* (online), 27 February 2005. Online at http://new.mn.ru/english issue.php.
[266] Recently, the Kaliningrad issue featured in Russian concerns about EU expansion (*Pravda*, for example, calling the issue a 'bitter' one for Russia [25/7/02], although it was fairly swiftly resolved).

Once again, the constructivist national identity account can go some way towards explaining why this was an important issue for Russians, but the manner with which the Kaliningrad issue was dealt cannot be explained by reference to Russian national identity, indeed, the constructivist framework would lead one to expect it to have become a much more serious issue.

Chechnya

Along with economics, the most serious area of confrontation between the EU and Russia was Chechnya. The EU and associated bodies showed themselves to be more willing than NATO to criticise Russian actions in the Caucasian republic. Criticism of Russia 'was energetically endorsed by some "pure European" multilateral structures, including the EU and the Council of Europe' (Baranovsky, 2000: 456). This caused some irritation in Moscow.[267] The first Chechen conflict, which began at the end of 1994, led to suspension of ratification of the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) in EU countries. The EU made several statements on Chechnya in early 1995. In January, for example, the Commission of the EU 'declared it would not forward the Interim Agreement [on trade and commercial aspects of the PCA]... Instead, the commission first wanted to discuss freezing the whole matter among EU countries as a protest against Russian actions' (Pursiainen, 1999: 149).

Human rights treaties signed by Russia were cited in such circumstances: on 17 and 23 January 1995, for example, the EU referred to Article 2 of the PCA, which states that 'respect for the democratic principles and human rights as defined in particular in the Helsinki Final Act and the Charter of Paris for a New Europe underpin the internal and external policies of the Parties. The Partnership Agreement itself was not in force, however, and "sources" from the Commission informed journalists in December 1994 that because of this, appeal could not be made to the articles of the agreement referring to human and minority rights' (Pursiainen, 1999: 135, footnote 96).[268]

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[267] Especially when the EU states (with a little wavering) supported NATO actions in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo. However, compared with the opprobrium heaped on the US, the European states were relatively lightly treated from this point of view.

[268] On 10 January, the Council of Europe also made an announcement on putting Russia's membership application on hold.

This provoked some signs of reaction among the Russian elite. As one commentator put it, 'one cannot... fail to notice the EU tries to impose sanctions on Russia, which runs counter to the declared principles of partnership. For example, in early 1995 the signing of an EU-Russian Provisional Agreement was frozen. This Agreement would bring into effect the "greater" [PCA] trade articles – until the ratification of the Agreement, which can well be delayed for rather a long time. Pretext for it was found in the events in Chechnya' (Pichugin, 1996: 94).[269] The Russian side demonstrated signs of resentment towards its European (as opposed to NATO) interlocutors on this issue. According to Trenin (1996: 31), while in general as we have seen, 'Russia and the European Union have failed to embark on broad interaction – partly owing to the continuing economic crisis in Russia and partly owing to internal problems related to national egoism in the EU countries, [this was] basically for political reasons related, in particular, to the war in Chechnya'.

To many in the Russian leadership the Chechen conflict was – among its many causes – about the integrity of the Russian Federation. It was a demonstration of the determination of the new Russian state to defend its borders and ensure its very survival. The Chechens were seen as a dangerous and extremist group of bandits by many people in Russia and became an extremely important domestic 'other'. The conflict was closely connected to Russian national identity. Therefore, 'Europe appeared to be obstructing the fight against terrorists' (Donaldson & Nogee, 2000: 230). Opinion polls showed that many Russians also believed that a negotiated settlement would be required to bring an end to the conflicts.[270]

Although Russia was subjected to criticism by the EU, the effects in Russia were limited. Kozyrev stated, in 1995, 'common sense tells that the USA or the EU will not adopt economic sanctions against Russia' (Pursiainen, 1999: 153). Yet 'such sanctions need not have been strictly material. One of Russia's openly declared main goals in Europe was to be integrated into the all-European framework of cooperation and Russia was vulnerable from this point of view'

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[269] Boris Pichugin was chief research associate with the institute for European Studies of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

[270] At the end of the decade (December 1999) the Levada Centre asked respondents 'Do you consider that it is necessary to continue military action in Chechnya or begin peaceful negotiations with the Chechen leadership?' 22% replied that peaceful negotiations were required, while 67% said it was necessary to continue military operations (see http://www.russiavotes.org/chechnya).

(Pursiainen, 1999: 153). Once again, the situation was potentially extremely grave from Russia's point of view. The EU was able to portray Russia as lying outside the civilised pale – of Western civilisation – and suspension of Russian accession to EU and related bodies was the means by which this was carried out.

The Russian response was muted. In the conflict zone itself the military and security services continued as before, although some token and grudging acceptance of observers was agreed to by Moscow. In diplomatic forums, Putin (as Prime Minister) 'refrained from over-reacting to the EU's position on Chechnya[271]... Similarly, the presidential administration dampened the ardour of the State Duma when the idea of withdrawing from the Council of Europe was discussed' (Baranovsky, 2000: 457, footnote 8). The EU itself began to water down its comments on Chechnya, beginning to aim some negative comments at the Chechens themselves. By the end of 1996, ratification of the PCA had been carried out in 9 of the 12 member-states of the Union, which had signed the agreement in 1994.

The Council of Europe, meanwhile, admitted Russia after a tortuous process involving many of the same issues as those just noted.[272] Kozyrev had stated in 1992 that 'the task of reintegration into the family of European civilization and developing a state based on the rule of law mandates that Russia join the Council of Europe' (Kozyrev, 1992: 290). Russia applied for membership in May 1992 and was only accepted in early 1996. This followed criticism of Russia's human-rights violations in Chechnya by the Council and, as noted, by the EU. Membership was offered in January 1996, which the Russian Duma approved on 21 February and the Federation Council the following day. Only a few weeks earlier, in mid-January 1996, the Council had criticised Russian human rights. Russia, it said, 'could not be considered a "rule of law" state... but the Council fact-finding mission leader Rudolf Bindig said it would recommend Russian membership as it was making progress and membership would encourage more progress' (RFE/RL, 15 January 1996). 'The Council of Europe's February 1996 decision to invite Russia to become a member served as a signal towards a de-freezing of contacts between

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[271] The one adopted in December 1999 in Helsinki.

[272] As noted in Chapter 6, though the Council is not an EU institution, membership of the Council was a step towards integration with Europe, to closer relations with the Union, and was used by the EU as a means of reaching out to potential future members.

Moscow and Western European capitals' (*Evropeiskii Soiuz,* 1997: 23). Even after this, Yeltsin had said that Russia was unwilling or unable to meet some Council conditions for membership, in a meeting with German Foreign Minister, Klaus Kinkel. 'It is feared... that failure to satisfy the Council's high standards regarding human rights and democracy would leave Russia vulnerable to severe criticism that might seriously damage its prestige' (Baranovsky, 2000: 453).

Towards the end of the decade (and before the start of the second war in the republic), the Chechnya issue had again been sidelined and positive remarks were commonly heard being made about the EU's role by the Russian side: in late 1999, for example, Ivanov supported Putin's statement[273] that Western leaders understood the anti-terrorist measures undertaken by Russia and that Chechnya is a purely domestic matter, and said that he welcomed European and EU support for Russia's territorial integrity. At around the same time the US pressed Russia to find a political settlement, provoking irritation among Russians who thought the US should have done the same in Kosovo. Criticism at the Helsinki Summit in December 1999,[274] for example, was regarded as 'hypocritical, reflecting double standards, in the light of what had happened in Kosovo' (Donaldson & Nogee, 2000: 230). After this the EU tended to adopt a 'balanced' criticism of the Chechens along with mild censure of the Russian side. Thus the issue became one of regret at the war, rather than an overt attack on Russia's uncivilized behaviour.[275] The EU drew back from its criticism of this extremely sensitive point for Russians.

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[273] At that time Prime Minister.

[274] The EU-Russia Summit was the fourth such summit to be held in accordance with the provisions of the PCA.

[275] Such activities in turn brought the EU and its associated institutions under fire from human rights groups, such as when in March 1996 (i.e. just after Russia's admittance to the Council of Europe), Human Rights Watch criticised the EU for ratifying the interim trade accord with Russia (the previous November) and urged the EU and Council of Europe to end "silent diplomacy" (RFE/RL, 19 March 1996). The Council did still raise questions over Chechnya and related issues, as when it criticized Russia on its use of the death penalty, in the summer of 1996.

The economic irritant

The other major serious area of discord between Russia and the EU was over trading rights and Russian exclusion from the EU free trade zone, which would expand eastwards with the accession of new members early in the 21st century.[276] Russian industries would be subject to trade restrictions because the Russian economy was not considered to be a full market economy. Through its anti-dumping measures, the EU excluded many Russian goods from tariff-free trading rights.

A frequent criticism of Yeltsin's governments by their nationalist opponents was that they were allowing Russia to become a source of cheap subsidies to the West, leading to the plundering of the country's natural resources; the West, it was suggested, had an interest in preventing Russia from recovering economically, in order to maintain this flow of cheap materials; one means of doing so was through inequitable restrictions. The government's response was to echo these calls in international forums; Viktor Chernomyrdin, for example, frequently called for greater access to EU markets for Russian products.

When it came to impeding Russia's economic development, the EU was the chief villain: it had become Russia's largest trading partner, accounting by the mid-1990s for 40% of its foreign trade.[277] Thus the protective tariffs in place were particularly painful for the Russian economy, and a threat to the rebuilding process and the aim of creating a powerful state. This was certainly something that produced a relatively high level of anti-EU protests from Russian commentators. It was also an area for which NATO certainly could not be blamed (Lukin, 2002).[278]

To some Russians, these trade barriers resulted from the manner in which the EU perceived Russia in general terms. 'Though an agreement was signed in 1994 between Russia and the EC, my country remains more of an irritant than a partner for the Brussels officials. This is why discriminatory measures against Russian goods are introduced with such ease. In this situation it is senseless to

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[276] A 'pre-accession strategy' was adopted by the European Council in 1994. In June 1997, the European Council recommended that the European Commission should commence negotiations with the governments of Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia for membership of the EU. In October 1999 Slovakia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Bulgaria and Malta were also invited to begin negotiations. (Light et al., 2000b: 490).

[277] See Chapter 6 for full details.

[278] Vladimir Lukin, writing in *Moscow News* in December 2002. Cited in *Moscow News*, 27 February 2005. Online at http://new.mn.ru/english/issue.php.

complain. One of the saddest consequences of the Cold War is that Russia has been outside the European and global markets which have been built in recent years. It is now absolutely impossible to join them immediately' (Golts, 1997: paragraphs 1-4). A discriminatory situation for Russian products also emerged 'in the Central and Eastern Europe and the Baltic states as well' (Pichugin, 1996: 93). EU spokesmen, nevertheless, 'allege that emergence of a free trade zone between the Community and the associated countries does not affect Russian interests seriously, as the Union's custom tariffs for our goods average less than one percent. They seem to be dodging, since the stated number does not correspond to the actual state of the facts' (Pichugin, 1996: 93-94).

To Russia's political realists the argument was still true that 'in contrast with the past, the West now prefers economic rather than military instruments for putting pressure on Russia. According to these paradigms, the aim of the EU policies is to secure Russia's status as the West's "younger partner" and a source of cheap natural resources and labour' (Sergounin, 2000: 3). The prevailing consensus on the West, as it had developed by the mid-1990s, was more cautiously nationalistic, however, and hence the general tone emerging from elite mouthpieces was milder. One further effect of Russian national identity on relations with the EU was that the language of the pragmatic-realist school which dominated Russian security discourse led to 'a discrepancy between the Russian and European discourses on borders and their role in the future international relations system. While the Russian discourse emphasises the need to protect national interests and territorial integrity, including external borders, Europe increasingly finds itself in a post-modern world where borders are relatively unimportant (within the EU itself) and emphasis is placed on cross-border and trans-border co-operation' (Sergounin, 2000: 5).

Despite the concerns of these commentators, the issue was generally seen as a practical problem that could and would be dealt with by the appropriate ministerial departments. After the excitement over the trade agreement welcomed with such enthusiasm by Yeltsin, Kozyrev claimed that 'The document signed falls short of the comprehensive agreement that both sides had hoped for'. But he 'expressed his assurance that the full agreement would be signed within the next twelve months... in an interview with ITAR-TASS on 9 December [he added that]

that the discriminatory barriers for Russian exports, which existed in the first versions of the treaty, had all been removed' (RFE/RL, 10 December 1993).

Thus a joint declaration issued by Yeltsin, Gerhard Schroeder and Jacques Santer in March 1999 contained the usual references to the settlement of regional conflicts, including a political settlement in Kosovo, increasing the role of the OSCE in questions of European cooperation and security and so on. But it also included the statement that 'Russia expressed itself in favour of making joint progress towards creating equal and non-discriminatory conditions of economic cooperation, a balanced improvement of the regime of goods and services trade. The EU expressed concern over the significant fall in exports from the EU to Russia and... underlined the growing need for the Russian government to settle the EU's remaining concerns relating to market access' (*Diplomaticheskii Vestnik*, March 1999).

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Thus there were obstacles to the smooth progress of Russia-EU relations, which would seem to have had the potential to become more serious than they did in fact become. Russia's national identity issues made the issue of the EU problematic because 'for Russia, with its problems, the "entry into Europe" as regards conformity to the criteria of membership of the EU, is a task of the non-foreseeable future. Moreover, the perspective of its entry in the EU is really absent, not only owing to the social and political backwardness of the country and the low standard of living of the majority of the population' (Trenin, 2004: 12). Yet the more strongly nationalist elements among Russia's elite maintained at the same time that 'Russia is great enough for dominating the EU, once it has become a member of it. The Russian leaders, who are in favour of a development of the economic, political and humanitarian relations, do not accept the Russian Federation to be just an object of "Europeanization" policy. The enlargement of the "normative empire" of the European Union is a challenge for Russia (Trenin, 2004: 12). But it was not a challenge that particularly taxed either Russia's elite taken as a whole or the population at large.

It is in fact difficult to explain why the Russian elite remained so determinedly ignorant or blasé with regard to the Union, and in particular its expansion. This ignorance 'is characteristic not only of ordinary people – which is understandable in the tense socio-political climate – but of representatives of the elite, who are supposed to be aware of major processes taking place in the world at large' (Eggert, 1997: paragraphs 1-2). Lowenhardt (2000: 6) found that views within the elite were broadly in agreement with this analysis. Indeed, only 'officials in the relevant ministries who deal with EU expansion are well aware that EU enlargement may have negative consequences for Russia' (Light et al., 2000a: 7). They evidently did not have the ability to raise these issues to a level of great importance for the foreign policy elite. Therefore, while 'remaining outside the EU as it expands its territorial space and functional scope may exacerbate Russia's concerns about its own role in Europe, for the time being, these concerns have not been articulated in a very explicit way – supposedly due to Russia's obsession with the issue of NATO enlargement... further consolidation of the EU will sooner or later make it clear that the dividing line between members and non-members might become much more fundamental than in the case of NATO' (Baranovsky, 2000: 453).

A balance of views

Near the end the end of the decade, the EU and Russia formalised relations in two major documents: the EU produced its 'Common Strategy toward Russia' and Russia a 'Medium-Term Strategy for Developing Relations of the Russian Federation with the European Union for 2000-2010'. These two documents laid out in detail each side's perception of the other. The Common Strategy demonstrated how the EU saw Russia and its role in relation to Western Europe; the Russian reaction confirmed how the foreign policy establishment viewed the EU, and also to what extent Russia's sense of its place in the world was influenced by the EU.

Decisions taken at the Cologne (3-4 June 1999) and Helsinki (10-11 December 1999) summits between the EU and Russia 'stressed the role of the Western European track within security developments in Europe and in European

politics in general. Both of these summits were equally important for Russia-EU relations' (Malgin, 2001: paragraph 25). In Cologne, the EU's 'Common Strategy toward Russia' was adopted – the first of its kind. This emphasised the difference in many Russians' minds between the EU and NATO, and also 'effectively played the role of an ice-breaker to crush the anti-Western mood of the Russian public and – above all – of the Russian foreign policy community; a mood that had emerged as a result of the Kosovo bombardments. Moscow's response came without delay' (Malgin, 2001: paragraph 25). The EU emerged from the Kosovo conflict once more as the friendly face of the West, in contrast to NATO. 'Despite the fact that Moscow's relations with NATO returned... to the previously established level of contacts, the "Kosovo spirit" was still dominant amongst the Russian elite... the situation in Europe at the turn of the Millennium left no choice for Russia but to develop relations with the EU. Moscow started perceiving the EU as the most efficient (and, at the time, the only viable) channel of communication with the Western world as a whole' (Malgin, 2001: paragraph 27).[279] In late March 1999 a Russian delegation even consulted the EU on the situation in former Yugoslavia after a trip to Belgrade, where Primakov had been accompanied by Foreign Minister Ivanov and Defence Minister Sergeev.[280]

At the Russia-EU summit in Helsinki (22 October 1999), Russia unveiled its 'Medium-Term Strategy for developing relations with the EU for 2000-2010'. The joint communiqué issued on 22 October 1999 by Paavo Lipponen (President of the European Council), Romano Prodi (President of the European Commission),

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[279] As *Izvestiia* reported (25 March, 1999), 'The US succeeded so well in putting pressure on its partners and bending them all in participating in this military adventure, that even Greece ended up in their group... this military operation is useful to the US so that in the height of the trade and economic tension with the countries of the EU, make them understand who is indeed the master in European affairs. Can Europe do without the global support of the US for a not too expensive price? During the coming days and weeks the Europeans will have to answer many questions which until today they have ignored, assuming that what happened in Iraq could not happen in Europe... Russia is a European state, just like England or France or Yugoslavia, and it also loses much from the current turn of events.'

[280] A series of interviews and focus groups carried out in Russia in the aftermath of the Kosovo conflict revealed how many Russians perceived the difference between NATO and the EU to be an important one: 'NATO and the USA were widely seen as synonymous; in the words of one participant, "NATO is America, even children know that". The war in Yugoslavia was "the result of America's aspirations to world-wide hegemony", according to a participant in the Moscow region. Even among the foreign policy élite, far less blame for the attack on Serbia was attached to European NATO members than to the USA. NATO is "being used by the USA to weaken Western Europe"... "the EU was subservient to NATO and the Americans" in the Kosovo conflict. "The USA now openly says it wants to rule the world"' (Light et al., 2000b: 495).

Javier Solana (Secretary General of the Council, High Representative), and Vladimir Putin (Russian Prime Minister, representing Yeltsin) stated simply that. 'The European Union and the Russian Federation exchanged views on the situation in the Northern Caucasus' (Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1999) and dealt blandly with general matters, describing the fact that the summit 'provided a unique opportunity to discuss the ways to strengthen our partnership... We welcomed the Common Strategy of the European Union on Russia adopted in June 1999 by the European Council in Cologne as well as the Medium-term Strategy for Developing Relations of the Russian Federation with the European Union for 2000-2010... The documents highlight the significance both sides attach to a close political and economic partnership and its further development within the framework of the PCA. They are based on common values such as respect of the principles of democracy and human rights, the rule of law and the market economy and share the common objectives of enhancing political stability and economic prosperity in Europe'.[281]

The EU's Common Strategy

The adoption of the Common Strategy was the first of its kind 'towards a third country... Russia was selected as the first partner for this new instrument of EU policy' (European Commission, 2001: paragraph 9). In the Strategy the EU identified 'two clear goals: a stable, open and pluralistic democracy in Russia, governed by the rule of law and underpinned by a prosperous market economy benefiting alike all the people of Russia and of the European Union; maintaining European stability, promoting global security and responding to the common challenges of the continent through intensified cooperation with Russia (European Commission, 2001: paragraph 10). Along with the PCA, the Strategy 'is the political basis for EU-Russia relations'.

By means of the Strategy the EU laid down the law as to what it expected of Russia. Despite the friendly tone of this document, once again there is the clear suggestion that Russia is still 'in transition' and these things are not at all safely achieved. The EU aimed to 'strengthen the rule of law... by encouraging' Russia to

[281] Text taken from the Delegation of the European Commission in Russia web site: http://www.eur.ru.

develop the necessary institutions in the creation of 'a modern and effective administration with Russia's Executive, Legislature and Judiciary at federal, regional and local levels; in particular by developing the capacity of an independent judiciary, public administration [and so on]'.[282] In the economic sphere, the EU claimed it would consolidate the process of economic reform in Russia, by among other things, 'encouraging Russia to remove obstacles to trade and investment, in particular through the improvement of border crossing procedures and facilities and by examining, in accordance with EU rules and procedures, Russian concerns with [ways] to access to the EU market'.

However, the Common Strategy goes on to state that, 'the issues which the whole continent faces can be resolved only through ever closer cooperation between Russia and the European Union. The European Union welcomes Russia's return to its rightful place in the European family in a spirit of friendship, cooperation and the accommodation of interests and on the foundations of shared values enshrined in the common heritage of European civilisation'. The Strategy thus ascribes to Russia a place in Europe, rather than on the edge of Europe, but this is only on condition that Russia meets certain requirements.

Russia's Medium-Term Strategy

Russia's Medium-Term Strategy (2000-2010) was the official response to the Common Strategy, reflecting Russia's concerns, and was presented to the European Council in October 1999. It determined the 'objectives of development of Russia's relations with the European Union for the next decade and means of their achievement. It is a consistent evolution of the general foreign policy concept of Russia in the European area and it stems from the objective need to establish a multipolar world, common histories of nations and responsibility of European States for the future of the continent, and complementarity of their economies. It is also directly coordinated with the concept of economic security of Russia. It provides for the construction of a united Europe without dividing lines and the

[282] These and following quotations from the Common Strategy taken from the European Commission's web site: http://www.europa.eu.

interrelated and balanced strengthening of the positions of Russia and the EU within an international community of the 21st century'.[283]

The Strategy claimed to reflect 'the main orientation and objectives of the EU's Common Strategy. In this context, Russia indicates the following areas as priority tasks in developing and strengthening the relations of partnership and cooperation with the EU up to 2010: strategic character of the Russia – EU partnership; enlarging the format and improving the efficiency of the political dialogue; development of mutual trade and investments; cooperation in the financial field; securing Russian interests in an expanding European Union [and so on]'. The document thereby viewed the EU (and Western Europe generally as detached from the US) as the positive face of the West. It placed Russia firmly in the heart of Europe. The Strategy also suggested that 'the development of partnership with the EU should continue consolidating Russia's role as a leading power in shaping a new system of ... political and economic relations in the CIS area'.

Section 5 of the Strategy described the 'ambivalent impact' of enlargement on Russian interests. Taking this into account 'and the terms of its cooperation with Russia and in the Russian interests, to [achieve] the best advantages of such expansion (lower customs protection civilised transit standards etc.) while preventing, eliminating or setting off the negative consequences.' Before the next expansion of the European Union the Strategy advocated conducting 'consultations with its individual members and candidates aimed at securing Russia's interests [regarding]... EU agricultural, technological and antidumping policies... [and] visa regimes... to safeguard... the rights of the Russian-speaking population in the [former Soviet] states... In accordance with the Declaration signed by the EU, to take an active role in creating the "European information society" and to assure that Russia is considered to be an integral part of it'.

The Strategy 'sets as a priority "achieving the best advantages" and "preventing, eliminating or setting off possible adverse consequences" of enlargement. It also calls for consultations to secure Russia's interests as the *acquis*

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[283] These and the following quotations taken from the European Commission's translation of the Medium-Term Strategy at:
http://www.europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/russian_medium_term_strategy/index.htm.

is adopted in the [central and eastern European] countries. The issue of exclusion is thus raised as potentially harmful to Russian interests' (Light et al., 2000a: 8). The Medium-Term Strategy maintained that 'efforts will continue to be made for further opening of the EU's market to Russian exports, elimination of the remaining discrimination in trade... protection of Russia's legitimate interests... opposing possible attempts to hamper economic integration in the CIS... to the detriment of Russia's interests'. The point was repeated once more: Russia's aim was 'to continue to work on creating favourable conditions for access of Russian-made goods and services to the EU market and eliminate elements of discrimination, fully recognizing the market status of Russia's economy'. One attempt to increase links between the EU and Russia came in the form of the Northern Dimension Initiative.[284]

As regards the EU's emerging defence capabilities, 'the authors of the Medium-Term Strategy were clearly well informed on the subject... and they took a positive view of the prospect of the CFSP acquiring a defence aspect. The preamble to the Strategy maintains that a "strategic partnership" between Russia and the EU can achieve a pan-European system of collective security based on "equality without dividing lines". This system will not isolate the United States and NATO but nor will it permit them to dominate the continent. The Medium-Term Strategy also calls... for practical cooperation with the WEU in the area of security "which could counterbalance... the NATO-ism in Europe". In other words, a military aspect to the CFSP was perceived to offer an alternative European security structure, which would diminish NATO's importance in Europe' (Light et al., 2000a: 8-9).

The document is revealing of Russian elite attitudes to EU expansion, touching on points of concern and their potential rectification. It is in the nature of such documents to avoid controversy; but the document is clearly in keeping with

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[284] The initiative aimed to increase trade between Russia's northern regions and those of the EU. Reaction to the project was mixed, and from a Russian national identity point of view, connected to the manner in which different groups saw Russian identity overall. 'The Northern Dimension was first recognised EU-wide at the Luxembourg European Council in December 1997. In the following years, it was developed into a more concrete concept. The Vienna European Council in December 1998 adopted a Commission Communication on a '*Northern Dimension for the policies of the Union*'. Six months later in Cologne the European Council adopted *Guidelines for the implementation of the Northern Dimension*. In November 1999, the Finnish EU Presidency held a Foreign Ministerial Conference on the Northern Dimension, where an *Inventory of current activities under the Northern Dimension* was adopted (European Commission, 2003).

the overall tone of the relationship established by the various sources over the decade noted previously. This tone is generally positive though occasionally edgy with regard to being excluded from the EU and resulting discrimination. The EU makes somewhat high-handed remarks about assisting Russia to attain and sustain democracy. But the sense is one of optimism.

At the same time, the two strategies also show some signs of talking past each other, which is partly explained by the somewhat vague attitude of the Russian side: 'The partners underline somewhat different fields although trade is the main focus of both sides... EU's focus is on economic and social development and the ambition [of Russia] is rather to be an economic superpower. The actors of the partnership are thus highly asymmetrical and the future of the partnership is an open question' (Cronberg, 2002: 5).

A partnership without thrills

The EU, being viewed as primarily an economic organisation, was generally perceived neither as a threat, nor even particularly interesting; rather, it was hoped that it would provide some economic opportunities which were clearly vital to the successful development of the Russian nation. There were some aspects of the relationship that caused irritation, sometimes over long periods, owing to denial of those opportunities. But Russia's national identity debate did not explicitly make much of the EU, and it seems that it was ignorance that played a large part in this situation. The fact that the EU had not been, like NATO, a military force brought into being specifically as an enemy of the USSR made its existence less directly threatening to Russian existence and self-perception as a great power. The Russian elite, full of anguish over NATO enlargement, and coping with a plethora of domestic and international crises, found itself without time to worry about the EU. The very intensity and urgency of Russia's national identity debate perhaps left little room for discourse on matters which were, objectively perhaps, of vital importance to Russia – such as trade with the EU. The very intensity with which NATO was constructed as Russia's other left little space for the EU in the discourse. 'It is much easier for Russia to establish relation with a union of several large countries than with one superpower. Russia will be much more comfortable as an equal partner among other dwellers of the European "home" than as a former

great power standing opposed to one of the mightiest forces in the world' (Inozemtsev, 2002: 132).

The nationalist opposition, which made little of the EU's expansion, if anything saw it as a counterweight to NATO, symbolising reasonable European intentions towards Russia. Sections of the Russian elite did recognise the importance of the EU, and the fact that it could be 'a vital actor in the process of improving the Soviet Union's and then Russia's relations with what was referred to in different contexts as "Europe" and "the West" and also fostering the domestic political and economic transformation of the Soviet Union and its former allies' (Williams & Neumann, 2000: 376).[285] But such recognition remained low key — thus in terms of Russian national identity the EU played a role, but a small one.

In terms of exclusion, clearly a crucial matter for Russian national identity, the EU played a mixed role. On the one hand, the Union excluded Russia from membership: to some Russians, including Vladimir Lukin, 'it was evident that the EU wants to build "an all-European club of civilized nations" using Russian resources and concessions; but it bars Russia from participating in European processes'.[286] Such developments were 'not very reassuring as far as Russia is concerned' (Baranovsky, 2000: 450-451). Yet on the other hand the EU also helped Russia achieve acceptance by other Western institutions, and as a player more generally in Western political life. The role that the EU played in this regard was often positive, and was seen to be expediting Russia's acceptance among the world's leading nations. This included the EU's assistance to Russia in its efforts to obtain membership of the World Trade Organization and public support for Russian concerns about the diaspora in the Baltic republics. In April 1998, for example, the Italian foreign minister, Lamberto Dini,[287] criticised Latvia's human rights record suggesting it would prevent Latvia's acceptance into the EU. In late July 1999, the Russian side responded in kind, when the Prime Minister, Sergei Stepashin, advocated a generally 'increased EU role. After meeting Finnish Prime Minister Lipponen and EU Foreign Affairs Commissioner Hans van den Broek in

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[285] See also Aalto (2001: 10): 'The fact that the EU is becoming a geopolitical subject, is in constructivist terms evident in the EU's and Russia's mutual recognition'.
[286] Vladimir Lukin, writing in *Moscow News* in December 2002. Cited in *Moscow News*, 27 February 2005. Online at http://new.mn.ru/english/issue.php.
[287] At a joint press conference held with Primakov, 8 April 1998.

Moscow... [he] said that given recent "changes" in the international arena "the role of the EU must be sharply increased in deciding international problems", particularly in the "military-political" sphere. [He]... urged that Russia be regarded as an "equal partner" in Europe... [he added that he believed that] the planned EU-Russia summit in Helsinki in October will put cooperation between the Union and Moscow on a "new level"' (RFE/RL, 30 July 1999).

The Russian attitude was generally to subsume the problems encountered in relations with the EU within the overall positive relationship. In the Foreign Policy Concept of 2000, for example, the EU was given a mixed review, relations not yet having achieved 'full effectiveness' and the union being castigated for not showing 'adequate respect for the interests of the Russian side in the process of EU expansion and reform' (*Foreign Policy Concept of the Russian Federation,* 2000: paragraph 81). In general, though, 'the document describes in 'optimistically affirmative terms... a relationship with actors within a worldwide framework that assumes its inclusive and multilateral nature, and a hopeful, cooperation-oriented outlook employing terminology of partnership towards states/groups of states, relations with which may be expected to be problematic, the EU being recognised as the single most important "partner"' (Kassianova, 2001: 833-834).

The Russia-EU relationship also reflected different views of Russian national identity among the elite. 'Moderate nationalist positions hold that Russia, owing to its geographic position and cultural heritage, has to strike a balance between East and West. Russia's natural task is seen as assuming the role of a bridge in the Eurasian region, representing, among other things, the interests of Russians living in the countries of the CIS and in the Baltic States. This trend is not anti-Western, but seeks to draw attention to the problem of securing Russian national interests in the East. Its adherents believe that cooperation with Western institutions in the field of security represents a deal, a concession to the West in exchange for cooperation with the EU, which they welcome and support' (Parkhalina, 2002: 2). Parkhalina's view was that a generational change among the elite is required to alter Russian foreign policy; the Yeltsin period was one of transition. 'As for the Westernizers and the radical national conservatives, they are losing public support. [Yet]... the younger generation does not want to see itself cut off from the West on ideological grounds' (Parkhalina, 2002: 2). In such

domestic struggles over Russian identity and consequent international role. the EU was regarded positively by almost all sides.

In general, the Russian elite did not closely connect Russia's national identity with the EU. This was somewhat surprising from the constructivist point of view. It is hard to explain why, given the way the EU challenged Russia's place in the world in very similar ways to NATO, the Russian side remained indifferent. As the Russian domestic identity debate ground on, pivoting around the question of Russia's relationship to the West, the question of Russia's relations with the EU was more or less ignored, at least until the appearance of the Medium-Term Strategy.

The persistence of feeling in Russia of the contrast between '"the good West of Europe/EU' with the "bad West of America/NATO"' was a major reason for this lack of interest (Light at al., 2000b: 497). It was also connected to Russian domestic politics, in the sense that Russia's '"entry into Europe" cannot be negotiated with Brussels. It has to be first "made in Russia" itself. A decade after the end of the Soviet Union, there are fewer and fewer illusions among both the elite and the public about a "unique Russian way". The next hurdle to take is to recognize that Russia as a self-contained and self-sustained "pole" (or a traditional great power) is already history' (Trenin, 2002: paragraph 5). After this is achieved, Russia will be in a better position to negotiate with the EU and develop closer relations with it. In this way, Russian national identity had an influence on Russia's relations with the EU, impeding (despite the avowedly pragmatic nationalist foreign policy) a coolly rational examination of Russian national interests.

In an article written in 2001, Igor Ivanov looked back on the post-Soviet period with a view to summing up Russian foreign policy. He suggested that 'the new Russia cannot consider itself a successor to the USSR as the champion of the theory of a global "class struggle," which had once served as an ideological basis for confrontation with the West as well as for the well-known use of force in Europe and Asia... Russian diplomacy combines the firm protection of national interests with a consistent search for mutually acceptable solutions through dialogue and cooperation with the West (Ivanov, 2001).

CHAPTER 10
CONCLUSION – FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR RESEARCH

Each of the two theoretical frameworks provided convincing answers to the research questions – but their weaknesses also became apparent. In any analysis of Russian foreign policy under Putin's presidency, the weaknesses would perhaps be reduced by combining the realist and constructivist approaches, and a brief overview of what has gone before will highlight the scope for such integration. It will also identify the need for a more detailed examination of Russian domestic politics.

The realist framework

Russia was initially interested in joining NATO – a bandwagoning strategy – because alliance with the former enemy, now the hegemonic power on the continent, was seen to be a way of enhancing Russian power. It soon became clear that Russia was not going to be able to join NATO and that NATO was expanding in size and in operational scope, both of which were perceived as threats. The Russians seemed to be on the point of moving to a balancing strategy. For example, they tried to use their agreement to NATO expansion to legitimise greater control over the CIS. But the realities of power – Russian weakness – meant that the latter strategy floundered. Bandwagoning continued, along with attempts to obtain as many concessions as possible for Russia, and the use of bargaining tactics to do so.

The response to the EU was very different and the evidence is thinner. The EU was not a military threat; rather, it was a potential source of economic recovery. At the same time, exclusion from the EU's area of free trade offered a threat to the rebuilding of the Russian state and its immediate security. The EU case does not in fact sit comfortably within realism's traditional focus of study – military security – although the framework developed in Chapter 2 outlined how states would be sensitive to economic threats owing to the links between economics and military power. The Russian leadership responded somewhat haphazardly to the promise and threat offered by the EU. Despite fears over trade

barriers, Russia pursued an economic 'bandwagoning' strategy towards the EU. But the realist explanation was relatively weak in explaining the detail of Russia's policies – or lack of them – towards the EU.

Generally, Russian reaction to the imbalance of power fitted many of realism's predictions. The neoclassical realist framework of Chapter 2 offered an effective means of organizing the facts of Russian policy towards both the EU and NATO, though it was more effective with regard to NATO. The Russian state followed reasonably clear policies towards NATO and the EU, despite serious conflicts among the elite and the institutions of policy-making, and its policies were coherent given the brute facts of the balance of power. The realist analysis was therefore able to make a coherent link between the external stimuli of material power and state policy. The Russian leadership used all the bargaining chips at their disposal – including the threat of nuclear war – to improve the situation and gain concessions. Their ambitions largely failed, though it could be argued that some useful concessions were obtained and that progress was made in rebuilding the state and laying the groundwork for the rehabilitation of the Russian military and economy. Yet, as Yeltsin left office he would have had to acknowledge that Russian exclusion from the important economic and security developments, and the continuing weakness of Russian military and economic power relative to the EU and NATO amounted to the strategic failure of the regime's avowed intentions.

The realist framework leaves some gaps in explanation. The original pro-Western course of Russian foreign policy took place because the leadership was strongly inclined towards a pro-Western view, a stance that changed quite radically and in ways that realism cannot entirely grasp: why was the change so sudden and so extreme? Why did the Russian elite focus so much on the West, despite the avowed 'independent' and balanced foreign policy? Realists would be obliged to acknowledge that some of the causes lie outside realism's remit.

It is also possible to argue that Russia's policy was not at all a rational response to the international environment in the 1990s, and that nationalist 'pragmatism' from the mid-1990s was quite the opposite. As Parkhalina (2002: 4) put it, 'the mentality of a beleaguered fortress allows a national consensus to emerge without addressing the real domestic problems in the political and

economic fields. This explains the behavior of Russian politicians at present. There are hardly any realistic assessments of Russia's real interests in a changed world'.

The constructivist framework

The second framework attempted to tackle some of the issues left unanswered by realist analysis. The view of Russia's national identity that dominated among members of Russia's elite changed over the decade so that by the mid-1990s foreign policy had become pragmatically nationalist, and this forms the basis for understanding why Russia became so hostile to NATO expansion. It is also a token of the manner in which Russia's elite felt betrayed by NATO's post-Cold War policies. The pragmatic nationalist strategy reflected a prevailing view of Russia as a great power, situated between East and West. Russia's relations with NATO also reflected the uncomfortable process of coming to terms with the country's new status as a much smaller, weaker Eurasian power than its Soviet predecessor – and of the failure of the pro-Western course.

The deals signed with NATO, like the Partnership for Peace, the Founding Act and the formation of the Permanent Joint Council, took place against a chorus of anti-NATO protest. The deals, however, still took place. Policy carried on unhappily despite NATO'S challenge to the attempt to define a place for the new Russia in the post-Cold War world. Constructivist theories argue powerfully for the influence of national identity in constraining the roles that foreign policy-makers feel able to play. Russia's national identity pushed the country's leadership towards fierce opposition to NATO, and NATO came to occupy a central place in policy-making. Yet the formation of national identity takes place in dialogue with the outside world, and it can be convincingly argued that NATO's construction of itself and potential members was a powerful influence on Russia's development and its relations with the West. NATO had been the most powerful challenge and primary cause of the failure of the pro-Western course; the manner in which NATO dealt with Russia – shifting it firmly if politely to the margins of the European security structure – helped to alter the perceptions of the elite, and the increasing suspicion of the West.

The constructivist explanation on its own is not enough, however, and, the conclusion of the constructivist framework 'in no way means that material power is

unimportant. Indeed it is doubtful that NATO could have played the role it has without its capacity for military strength and its reputation as such. But NATO's power cannot be reduced to this. Indeed, the power of the Alliance in the post-Cold War period derives in considerable part from the ability to maintain its military dimension while at the same time combining that dimension with a powerful cultural and political narrative that overcame the challenges faced by a purely military representation of the Alliance' (Williams & Neumann, 2000: 386). A combined explanation would seem to be the most persuasive.

NATO, in Russian discourse, became the 'other' *par excellence*. All political groups made the case that their preferred policies towards NATO were crucial matters for Russia's future. The EU, on the other hand, formed an almost incidental part of their programme, and discourse on the subject was much less divisive. Its role was therefore much less clear and much less important in Russian politics.

The EU was not seen as significant by the elite, and the constructivist framework struggles to supply a reason for this neglect. The potential significance of the EU was that it gathered together the nations of Western Europe while excluding the US. It showed what the future of European international relations would be like, as it expanded eastwards its unique manner of tying together the legal economic, democratic and ultimately defence systems of member nations. The manner in which the EU shifted Russia to the margins of this new Europe was carried out in a very similar way to NATO, and might have produced a much more urgent response.

Yet the reaction from Russia was very different. The EU was regarded as the positive aspect of the West, and Russian exclusion from the Union was seen as significant by a small minority among the Russian elite. Yeltsin and his foreign ministers (let alone his defence ministers) made very little of the EU throughout the decade. The constructivist framework did fill in some of the gaps left by the realist framework in explaining this situation: it did so by suggesting that in Russia one kind of 'West' was constructed as bad, i.e., NATO with the US at its head, while another kind of 'West' was constructed as good, i.e., Europe, often represented by the EU. Under Baranovsky's schema, the EU represented 'true' Europe, a Europe to aspire to, while NATO represented something threatening and negative. The

debate in Russia 'on foreign and security policy, future European security, future European security architecture, the role of NATO and the logic of European integration processes... manifests a certain type of culture shaped under the influence of some cultural and philosophical actors. [This] ... *partially* explains the attitude of different political forces towards formulating foreign and security policy as a whole and towards interacting with Western institutions in the field of security' (Parkhalina, 2002: 4).

Using the frameworks together

The possibility of using two such theories to provide a more complete explanation than either on its own has been considered in similar cases, showing how it might be done here. Charles Herman, for example, 'links dramatic changes in Soviet foreign policy and the end of the Cold War to the "new thinking" of parts of the Soviet elite. In this case a realist argument offers a plausible starting point of a more fully specified causal chain. Adverse shifts in the relative capabilities of the Soviet Union may have been a major factor in how the reformers could install themselves in power in the first place' (Katzenstein, 1996: 70). The ways this might be done include 'stage-complementarity', 'whereby one argument covers one phase of a process while another argument takes up the next phase. Thus the project's focus on the problem of interest definition leaves virtually unattended problems of strategic interaction, a complementary process' (Katzenstein, 1996: 70). In Carlsnaes' (1986) model, similarly, the intentional dimension could equate to what in this thesis the realist framework covered (realist considerations of power calculation), while the broader beliefs about the world and correct modes of behaviour operate in what Carlsnaes called the dispositional dimension. As Jervis (1998: 978-979) puts it, 'strategic rationality and deductive logic can be – indeed need to be – coupled with an appreciation of how actors attribute meaning to behavior. Rationalism cannot supply this knowledge, but constructivism is one of the approaches that can guide the required empirical research'.

In the case studies here (focusing on identity and interests), the 'stage complementarity' might flow both ways. 'It is useful analytically to distinguish identity from interests – if only to get some critical purchase in the issues raised in identity theory and politics... As already noted, the relationship between interests

and identity is best conceived as a recursive one, inseparably linked and "feeding back" reflexively one upon the other' (McSweeney, 1999: 168). Thus 'if identity is learned through the dual processes of domestic and international interaction... where do interests come from and how are they related to identity? Logically, they derive from identity, suggesting the priority of identity over interests... But this does not mean that identity cannot be altered, in practice, through a change in the interests which logically flow from it. We can be led to perceive ourselves differently – to choose a different position on the continuum of identities – by the opportunities which may be offered to satisfy new interests' (McSweeney, 1999: 167).

Thus the facts of material power that caused tactical shifts in Russian policy were filtered through various lenses through which the Russian elite viewed the world. One of the most important of these, in foreign policy-making, was that of national identity. This was the means by which the leadership made sense of Russia in the international field, and their role as foreign policy-makers. Yet the dominant shared understandings of national identity themselves changed (as the theory suggests they will always do), in part as a result of the manner in which policies demonstrated success or failure in relation to perhaps random external factors. These successes and failures were predicated partly on material factors, such as economic strength. Moreover, the understanding of Russian interests themselves altered as a result of Russia's physical attributes.

Given that there is the possibility for the two theories to work together in the ways suggested, what does the outcome tell us? Realism does not explain entirely the details of why the shift from Atlanticism to Eurasianism came when it did and took the form it did. Constructivism fills that role by outlining the frameworks within which the elite perceived the world and focused on the West. It shows, along with the realist perception of threat argument, why NATO came to be such an important external factor in Russian foreign policy. However, constructivism does not help us understand the tactics used in the struggle against NATO's move to the East. It is here that realism's focus on rational attempts to alter the balance of power is useful. Realism cannot, and does not aim to, understand the domestic causes of policy, and how the realities of the international

environment are translated into policy. Yet realism explains in part how identity comes to change, and how policies develop in response.

This combined approach might usefully be applied to the study of Vladimir Putin's foreign policy. Yet the inability of the theories to provide a fully satisfactory account of Russian policies towards the EU suggests that we need to focus on the details of policy-making and thus on the bureaucratic and personal rivalries that took place in Moscow.

The study of bureaucratic and individual interests

Any satisfactory study of Russian politics therefore has to take account of factors not accounted for by the two theoretical frameworks of this thesis. Many studies which do so already exist, and could be combined with the approach used here.

Foreign policy-making in Russia was extremely compartmentalized, divided between various power centres. The Foreign Ministry was in charge of formal diplomacy, the Ministry of Defence played the key role in arms control negotiations, and the Ministry of Finance 'keeps its monopoly over relations with the IMF and the World Bank. Such "feudalism" of foreign policy creates many problems, since each agency tries to enlarge its "sphere of influence" at the expense of all the others' (Kortunov, 1999: 42-43). Russian ignorance about the EU's expansion plans may, in fact 'simply reflect the problem of compartmentalisation which is characteristic of most bureaucracies but which afflicts Russia particularly severely. In other words, they may have been unaware of the EU's plans because their business was the economy, while military security was dealt with in other departments, and there was effectively no communication between departments.' (Light et al., 2000: 8).

In the near future, too, 'it seems clear that foreign policy decisions will be guided mostly by particular group interests, not by any broad public consensus on what Russian national interests really are... Groups with more financial resources will enjoy better connections in the Kremlin and will have more impact on the decision-making process' (Kortunov, 1999: 44-45). If policy is carried out in this way, and those making decisions are only concerned with the very near future (and their careers), the only way to understand policy-making is to take a very close examination of day-to-day politics.

Lo (2002), for example, argued that it might be necessary to 'accept – reluctantly from a political scientist's perspective – that [Russian foreign policy]... cannot be encapsulated except as a series of largely random and unconnected events, responses and policies... [perhaps] Moscow's overall approach reflected the dominant realities of the times: the primacy of sectional interests over any consensus vision of the national good, and the consequent factionalization and fragmentation of policy. It was this environment which ensured that much of the Kremlin's handling of business would be *ad hoc* and reactive' (Lo, 2002: 124-125). As the compartmentalised bureaucracies fought for their own interests, 'different groups and interests neutralizing one another... the outcome, almost entirely accidental, was a lowest common denominator conservatism that conveyed the illusion of consensus, but which amounted to little more than pragmatism by default' (Lo, 2002: 125).

This kind of argument assumes that policy-makers are rational actors interested solely in self-preservation (owing to the exigencies of Russia's particular political situation). Yet this does not refute the argument that policy-makers can only make sense of reality by means of shared understandings of the world. One of these relates to Russian national identity and consequent national interests, which is the way policy-makers make sense of Russian foreign policy to themselves and others. Moreover, despite the claims of randomness and inconsistency in Russian foreign policy, the factors in the external world that realists focus on could not be ignored. The various bureaucracies could not simply do as they liked, and were constrained by the international distribution of power. In short, the conclusion must be that particularly after 1993, the Russian state functioned more or less as a unitary actor in terms of the important issues such as NATO expansion. Future research in the field might, however, couple what has been attempted here with an examination of bureaucratic politics.

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Interviews

The following kindly agreed to be interviewed in London and Moscow

Tatiana Parkhalina, Director, Deputy Director, Institute for Scientific Information in Social Sciences, Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, 12 July 2002.

Boris Khalosha, Institute of World Economy and International Relations, Russian Academy of Sciences (IMEMO), Moscow, 17 July, 2002.

Michael Hewitt (Deputy Director of NATO Information office in Moscow NATO Information Center), Moscow, 9 July 2002.

Konstantin Eggert (BBC Russian Service, Moscow), London, 5 and 6 December 2002.

List of abbreviations

Abbreviations have been kept to a minimum, and where used are generally spelt out at the first mention in each chapter. This does not apply to NATO, the EU, the US, USSR and others which are too well-known for this rule to apply.

ABM treaty – Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty
CESDP – Common European Security and Defence Policy
CFSP – Common Foreign and Security Policy
CJTF – Combined Joint Task Force
CPSU – Communist Party of the Soviet Union
CPD – Congress of People's Deputies
EAPC – Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council
ESDI – European Security and Defence Identity
FIS – Foreign Intelligence Service
GDP – gross domestic product
IFOR – Implementation Force
IMEMO – Institute of World Economy and International Relations, Russian Academy of Sciences
IPP – Individual Partnership Programme
ISKRAN – Institute of American and Canadian Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences
NAC – North Atlantic Council
NACC – North Atlantic Cooperation Council
NMD – National Missile Defence
NPT – Non-Proliferation Treaty
PCA – Partnership and Cooperation Agreement
PfP – Partnership for Peace
PJC – Permanent Joint Council
RCP – Russian Communist Party
SACEUR – Supreme Allied Commander Europe
SFOR – Stabilisation Force
START – Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty
WEU – Western European Union
WTO – Warsaw Treaty Organisation